

Public Scoping Comments & Agency Responses

ELK	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Malaga unit for elk (cow) would start in Sept first week in Oct, Aug is too early because of the heat (weather). Keep up the good work.	The early Malaga special permit hunts are designed to take place when damage is occurring and maintain pressure through the course of the season. Hunters hunting in the August time period will have to plan in advance for things like meat care and processing.
Why is there no Colockum elk herd management plan on the website? Thank you for all your efforts in improving/ maintaining our hunting opportunities.	The Colockum Elk Herd Plan is in draft form right now and will be released for public review and comment by the first of the year. When it is released it will also appear on the WDFW web site at the same time.
If it is known that there will be antlerless elk hunts to alleviate damage to farm crops, why can't additional permits be allocated during regular antlerless hunting season?	Additional antlerless elk permits are often let during the regular hunting season when damage can be anticipated. However, the level of damage varies from year to year and is not always predictable and damage usually occurs at time periods different than regular hunting season. In addition, the department tries to target the elk causing the damage and general antlerless permits don't necessarily target the right elk.
Managing the entire state's mature bull elk herd through special permits will only push discouraged hunters to spend there time & money in other states that we can buy an elk tag over the counter & still chase & have quality hunts for mature bulls without going through the special permit drawing. Thank you for the chance to voice my concern for any possible upcoming proposals.	This recommendation came from hunters, however with the overwhelming opposition and management alternatives available, this proposal will not move forward.
The elk management plan in western WA is working & needs to be left alone the idea of making it spike only is not a good plan. When we changed it to 3-point or better it turned elk hunting around in western WA, the herds are healthier now & the quality of the hunt continues to improve. My personal experience for drawing a bull tag has not been pleasant. The rejection year after year is becoming a depressing situation.	This recommendation came from hunters, however with the overwhelming opposition and management alternatives available, this proposal will not move forward.

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Regarding Issue 47: I am strongly opposed to spike only in Western WA. I am very pleased with the 3-point or better system. It allows the spikes to mature & reach the age where they leave the herd & are less likely to be killed trailing behind the herd of cows. In Western WA the clear cuts are now growing up to provide excellent escapement for bigger bulls, so there is no need for additional protection for them by permit only hunting. I have purchased a WA hunting license for 55 years. I have archery hunted in both WA & Idaho for the past 20 years & I am not interested in hunting spikes. If this rule is passed I will not buy a WA hunting license. The 3-point or better system is working in Western WA. Don't mess it up. (There were 10 additional comments to the Department expressing this opinion.)	This recommendation came from hunters, however with the overwhelming opposition and management alternatives available, this proposal will not move forward.
<u>Elk Seasons-</u> - Traditional Bow - Sept 7 th -18 th , Traditional Muzzleloader - Oct 1 st -7 th , Modern Muzzleloader - Oct 8 th -14 th , Traditional Firearm – Nov 10 th -16 th , Modern Firearm – Nov 17 th -23 rd	WDFW staff considered several variations of the same hunting season structure that you are proposing. The majority consensus by our staff biologists is that bull populations will not be able to sustain this level of harvest pressure and still meet population objectives stated in the Game Management Plan.
If you made bull elk a permit in the Mica & Cheney area, you would help control the herd by allowing the harvest of cows to be the main harvest tool. This over time would decrease the population, & may alleviate some of the damage problems caused by the elk. Hunting on the Turnbull refuge with a special permit could produce some trophy bulls for the hunters.	If it is determined that there is a need to shift the harvest pressure from Any Elk to Antlerless Only, we would consider that approach. We are also working with the Turnbull refuge for permit options for the 2006 season.
I would like to see more road closures. Unit 329 where I hunt elk has far too many open roads. I think it would make for a higher quality of hunt if ATV's were not driving past me every ten minutes.	WDFW will continue to work with land managers like the U.S. Forest Service and state DNR to develop road management programs that provide balance for all users while maintaining wildlife populations.
Declare spike only on elk the failure that is, phase it out by issuing greatly increased branch bull permits for the next 2 years, on the third year drop spike & only go to 4-pt or better	WDFW does not consider eastern Washington elk seasons to be a failure. In fact, most of our constituents see it as a major success. Most herds are meeting post-hunt bull ratio objectives and hunters who draw special permits for branch-antlered bulls experience a great hunt with high success rates and a real opportunity at harvesting a quality, mature bull.

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As a representative of TransAlta Centralia Mining LLC, owners of the Centralia Mine, I would ask that you please ensure that the special elk hunts are scheduled to fall on Saturdays & Sundays. The 2005 hunts are currently scheduled for Sunday/Monday, which is not a good situation at the mine.	Thank you for the comment. This was an unintentional carry over from last year. We will adjust the dates for 2006.
Allow Eastern elk modern firearm hunters with the appropriate special permit to harvest antlerless elk starting with the first day of general elk season, same as what was allowed in 2003	Historically WDFW has allowed holders of special permits for branch-antlered bulls to have somewhere between two and five days to hunt prior to the general season opener depending on what the calendar would allow that year. These early days add to the quality of those mature, bull hunts. The season dates in 2003 were unintentional and will likely not be repeated.
There should be no elk hunting prior to Oct. 1 st	Thank you for your comment.
Start early elk archery season Sept 15–Sept 30	The current early archery elk season, Sept. 8-21, was adopted in 2003. Prior to that the early archery elk season was Sept. 1-15. The Department has made a concerted effort to avoid hunting elk during the peak of the rut because of bull vulnerability to harvest and breeding season disturbance. The time period you are suggesting would encompass the peak of the rut in most places. WDFW biologists are not comfortable pushing the early archery season any further into the rut period.
Split bull & cow permits equally between modern, muzzleloader & archery hunters	Bull elk special permits are divided among the three user groups based on a formula sanctioned by the Fish and Wildlife Commission. The formula takes harvest targets, historical success rates and participation rates and calculates the number of permits by weapon type required to achieve that harvest target. Antlerless permits are distributed based on the location and the type of harvest needed.
Open 300 GMUs for late muzzleloader elk	When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups. If muzzleloaders were determined to be lacking in the 300 GMUs then additional opportunity would be considered.
Open 300 GMUs for (AHE) master hunter special elk permits	AHE hunters currently have six special permit hunts available. The intent of the AHE program is to develop a group of service minded hunters to assist the department in addressing sensitive issues and landowner relations. The program was not intended to just encourage hunters to go through the curriculum in order to receive special hunting opportunities.

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No elk hunting on Turnbull NWR. There should be some safe havens for the elk in Eastern WA & Turnbull is one of them. What is the definition of a REFUGE? Yes, I am sure a lot of elk hunters are salivating to get on Turnbull, but reducing the population even further is not the answer	The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act identifies hunting as one of the six priority wildlife-dependent recreational uses that can take place on National Wildlife Refuges. These uses are to receive enhanced consideration by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in their planning and management. It is WDFW's stance that elk can be better managed in and around Turnbull Wildlife Refuge with a limited-entry, special permit hunt.
Move modern firearm general elk season to mid-late Nov	A modern firearm general season in mid- to late November would likely result in a higher than desired elk harvest due to weather conditions and the timing of migration.
Move elk & deer season back to later dates (i.e. deer-Oct 15-31, elk-Nov. 6-15) in Eastern WA	A later and longer modern firearm general season would likely result in a higher than desired mule deer and elk harvest that the populations could not sustain.
More opportunities for either sex elk in GMU 516 & 513 for all user groups	In GMUs 513 and 516 most of the antlerless elk harvest is related to agricultural damage complaints. It's unlikely that this population can sustain any additional antlerless harvest and keep moving toward population objectives.
Making modern firearm elk eastern open later	We're looking at historical harvest information when seasons were longer or later or both. A later modern firearm general season in Eastern Washington would likely result in a higher than desired elk harvest that the populations could not sustain.
Make all elk & deer antlerless hunts permit only for archery, muzzleloader & modern firearm	We don't think that is necessary in all cases, but thank you for your comment.
Make all archery units either sex	First the resource must be able to accommodate antlerless harvest. If capable of supporting added harvest, then new opportunities are considered and the equity between the three user groups (archers, muzzleloaders, and modern firearm hunters) is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Make 667 2-point or better	Our harvest and survey information do not suggest that we are lacking in mature bucks in this GMU. At this time it is not apparent that a 2-point antler restriction for black-tailed deer has benefits. Until that time we would be reluctant to impose additional 2-point antler restrictions for black-tailed deer.
Maintain the September 8 start date for early archery elk	Thank you for your comment.
Look into extending the modern firearm elk season longer or later	We're looking at historical harvest information when seasons were longer or later or both. A later, longer modern firearm general season may result in a higher than desired elk harvest that the populations could not sustain.

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Look for archery permits for elk in permit only areas such as watersheds	The WDFW offers elk special permits for two watershed GMUs. These GMUs are very restrictive in terms of dates and number of hunters that the land managers will allow. Under the current management strategies there is no room for any additional or separation of user groups or time frames. So the hunts are for modern firearm and any legal weapon may be used.
Look at rotation of elk muzzleloader units in district 5. The Coweeman is 'dead' for the late season	Thank you for your comment.
Increase the muzzleloader elk season to 2 weeks, not just 7 days. Archers have 2 weeks, 1 week too many.	At this point, muzzleloader harvest increased significantly when the early season went from five days to seven. If new opportunities become available, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups. If muzzleloaders were determined to be lacking in the then additional opportunity would be considered.
Increase the hunting days for modern firearm elk seasons. Maybe back to what it was when you could start in the middle of the week if you did not try for a permit	We're looking at historical harvest information when seasons were longer or later or both. A later, longer modern firearm general season may result in a higher than desired elk harvest that the populations could not sustain.
Have a late season archery elk season in GMU 360	If new opportunities become available, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Extend the hunting season for archery elk hunting in Eastern & Western Washington	As a general rule, archers are more successful than muzzleloader or modern firearm hunters. When new hunting opportunities are available, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Extend the elk archery season to the entire month of Sept	The current early archery elk season, Sept. 8-21, was adopted in 2003. Prior to that the early archery elk season was Sept. 1-15. The Department has made a concerted effort to avoid hunting elk during the peak of the rut because of bull vulnerability to harvest and breeding season disturbance. The time period you are suggesting would encompass the peak of the rut in most places. WDFW biologists are not comfortable pushing the early archery season any further into the rut period.

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Expand primitive weapon opportunities for elk in the Yakima herd (i.e. reinstate late hunts)	When new opportunities are available, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Expand disabled elk hunting opportunities	The intent of the department is to provide accommodations for hunters with disabilities to gain access to hunting not necessarily special opportunities. Where opportunities for greater access are available, we will expand them.
Eliminate the overlap of general early archery & AHE permit hunts or by adding additional season later than those already in place	We'll look into this and see if it's a significant problem.
Don't go back to single elk tag statewide	Thank you for your comment.
Create trophy elk tag 5-point minimum 5 year draw in selected units Sept 1-30 for modern firearm	This proposal would eliminate a lot of opportunity currently enjoyed by general season hunters and other user groups. When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Consider prohibiting or limiting the use of snowmobiles during all elk hunting	It is already illegal to hunt wildlife from a motor vehicle. It is also illegal to use motor driven vehicles to pursue, concentrate, or harass wildlife.
Consider making the persons with disability elk tag a statewide any elk tag to increase hunter success	Hunters with disabilities already have one of the highest success rates of all user groups (62% for both deer and elk special permits respectively in 2004).
Consider extending W.W. archery elk season	In most areas of western Washington, archers have greater success rates than other groups. When new opportunities are available, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Consider eliminating "any elk" units adjacent to 3-point minimum units & issue cow tags instead to prevent aggressive poaching across unit boundary lines	We will consider your concern for potential poaching issues, thank you for your comment.
Consider a cow only season in 658, 648. The cow to bull ratio is out of control	These GMUs are part of the Willapa Hills and Olympic elk herds, both of which are at or below population objective. Therefore we wouldn't want to get too aggressive with antlerless harvest in these populations.
Colockum archery has made a 180 from either sex to spike with no cow opportunity & now modern has cow permits that is not right	Thank you for your comment. Aerial survey trends for the last three years have indicated a decline in elk numbers on winter range. In response, WDFW reduced the antlerless harvest significantly for this population.

ELK	
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Close White River GMU to all elk hunting until sufficient numbers of elk return for hunting	At this time our survey information does not indicate that bull elk numbers have declined in the White River Unit to warrant closure.
Branched bull archery permits valid the entire & late seasons	A later and longer archery bull season would likely result in a higher than desired elk harvest that the populations could not sustain. If this were to happen the special permit formula would adjust the number of permits allowed as success rates increased which would ultimately result in fewer archery permits and less hunting opportunity.
Archery elk should get cow opportunity first 2 or 3 days of season if that will work	Those GMUs that can sustain antlerless archery harvest for elk are already open for either "Any Elk" or "3-Point Min. and Antlerless". Those antlerless opportunities are open for the entire season.
Allow permits to be applied for & drawn before committing to East or West side elk (3)	Requiring hunters to select between east and west for elk helps the Department reduce overcrowding. It also maintains the probability of being drawn for eastside special permit bulls. If this restriction were removed, the chance of being selected for an eastside special permit would decline because a lot more Westside elk hunters would now apply for those special permits
Allow more days to hunt elk, archery in unit 117	When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Allow modern firearm elk hunters in Eastern Washington to hunt late in November as an alternative to late October	We're looking at historical harvest information when seasons were longer or later or both. A later modern firearm general season in Eastern Washington would likely result in a higher than desired elk harvest that the populations could not sustain.
Allow drawn "any bull" permits to be used in either early or late archery season hunts	This could likely affect the success rates for these permits. Success rates are one of the variables fed into the special permit formula for bulls across all three of the weapon types. If success rates went up that increase would be reflected in fewer permits in the future. When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Provide opportunities in unit 516 to harvest cow elk during late season or any season or any weapon.	In GMU 516 most of the antlerless elk harvest is related to agricultural damage complaints. It's unlikely that this population can sustain any additional antlerless harvest and keep moving toward population objectives.

ELK	
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Provide opportunity for permit hunting elk in area 516	The Department is looking at elk harvest in GMU 516. If we determine that the elk resource can no longer sustain general season hunting opportunity we would consider other hunting season structures that are more restrictive.
Address the declining antlerless elk permits in the Colockum area. If damage control is an issue, then allocate more permits during regular antlerless season.	Aerial survey trends for the last three years have indicated a decline in Colockum elk numbers on winter range. In response, WDFW reduced the antlerless harvest significantly for this population. Despite those population trends, the Department must still deal with elk damage issues. Issuing more antlerless permits during the regular season may reduce elk numbers but may not target the appropriate elk when damage is taking place.
Reduce big bull permits for archery. They wound and lose more elk than all others combined.	Bull elk special permits are divided among the three user groups based on a formula sanctioned by the Fish and Wildlife Commission. The formula takes harvest targets, historical success rates and participation rates and calculates the number of permits by weapon type required to achieve that harvest target. Most studies have indicated that archery wounding loss is not significantly different from other weapons.
Add a late hunt to area 516 for archery elk either sex.	When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Re-establish 5 elk tags (Blue Mtns., Colockum, Yakima, Spokane, & Western) to reduce over crowding.	The current Eastside/Westside system for elk hunting seems to be addressing hunter crowding fairly well while still providing elk hunters some flexibility in where they choose to hunt.
Re-establish the September 1 st archery elk opening	The current early archery elk season, Sept. 8-21, was adopted in 2003. Prior to that the early archery elk season was Sept. 1-15. The Department has made a concerted effort to avoid hunting elk during the peak of the rut because of bull vulnerability to harvest and breeding season disturbance.
Make early archery elk start Sept 1 st end Sept 30 th	The current early archery elk season, Sept. 8-21, was adopted in 2003. Prior to that the early archery elk season was Sept. 1-15. The Department has made a concerted effort to avoid hunting elk during the peak of the rut because of bull vulnerability to harvest and breeding season disturbance.

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Re-instate penalty not allowing hunters to hunt 1 st three days of elk season, if not drawn for tag, reinstate the funding one used to provide farmers with leaving additional habitat on the edges of their property.	That “penalty” was designed to reduce crowding years ago. Now with separate seasons for each weapon type, crowding is much less of a problem and the penalty is not necessary. The Department is in the process of developing new policy on landowner incentives for providing hunter access and wildlife habitat.
Remove spike only restrictions for the Colockum and reduce damage hunts.	Removal of the spike only regulation would result in even worse bull survival rates than exist currently. This herd has continuous issues with meeting bull to cow ratio objectives. The Department is in a continual review and adjustment mode when it comes to dealing with wildlife damage both through conventional hunting seasons and the variety damage hunt options available to the Enforcement Program.
Retain current elk archery season 9/8-9/21	The current early archery elk season, Sept. 8-21, was adopted in 2003. Prior to that the early archery elk season was Sept. 1-15. The Department has made a concerted effort to avoid hunting elk during the peak of the rut because of bull vulnerability to harvest and breeding season disturbance.
Review the damage hunt vs. additional seasonal permits	The Department is in a continual review and adjust mode when it comes to dealing with wildlife damage both through conventional hunting seasons and the variety damage hunt options available to the Enforcement Program.
Review the damage hunt publicity and method. Provide a notice section to hunt vs. pay farmers.	The Department is in a continual review and adjust mode when it comes to dealing with wildlife damage both through conventional hunting seasons and the variety damage hunt options available to the Enforcement Program.

DEER	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Would like longer deer season for Douglas & Chelan Co.	The deer population in Douglas Co. is barely meeting post-hunt buck ratio objectives. The population in Chelan Co. is doing well and providing great hunting opportunity but to continue providing that quality deer hunting experience we will probably need to slightly increase the antlerless harvest and slightly decrease the antlered harvest. The Department won't be recommending longer deer seasons in Chelan or Douglas Counties.

DEER

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Would like to see "Rainy Island" & GMU 658 open for late season deer and/or elk. If I can assist in some way please let me know.	Our staff will assess this and determine if any additional opportunity can be provided. When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Application fee for trophy buck permits.	Washington statutes would have to be changed by the Legislature to allow an additional application fee for trophy buck permits.
My young new hunters are really excited when they see that big buck & that means more than killing a spike. For the meat they can shoot a doe.	Thank you for your comment.
With the easy winters in the past three years it is time to do a three year pilot program for the three point or better in eastern WA so the youth that are hunting will be able to see some larger bucks as well, making them more responsible to count before shooting. It is pertinent that we increase the quality & age of the bucks available even it means we may not shoot as many for all weapons. With your 15% three point kill ratio last year no is the time to move forward to expand that number to 25-30% with 15 being the bottom.	Eastern Washington provides a wide variety of deer hunting opportunity. Some of those areas have hunting season structures that provide for lower overall harvest but a reasonable opportunity to harvest a mature buck. Some of the areas provide a higher rate of harvest of younger age class animals with a higher rate of turnover in the population. Both types of Seasons structures are important to the deer hunters of Washington. The issue of improving buck ratios in northeast Washington will be considered and options available for comment next month.
Why not a late season for deer muzzleloader in GMU 124	When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
We need to do something about the Southwest blacktail population. Why is the deer population down so much & not seeming to make a come back?	The status of b-t deer populations is driven by several factors including loss of habitat due to human expansion, the reduced amount of timber that's being harvested, the silvicultural practices implemented after timber harvest, and all sources of mortality including hunting, predation and disease. Whether a deer population is doing well or poorly is usually related to a combination of these factors.
There are too many seasons. I am an avid deer/elk hunter for over 45 years, but you can't continue to have seasons from Sept-Jan. I would support having all seasons within a 6-8 week time frame. Limit some hunt units to specific weapons. I would support a total lottery to reduce the number of hunters in the field. There is not much quality blacktail hunting left on the Westside due to the tremendous number of hunters & the easy access due to all the logging roads.	The Department currently tries to provide the best hunting experience possible without becoming more restrictive. There are other ways to partition opportunity without removing hunters completely. Your proposal would definitely limit the number of hunting opportunities and greatly reduce the number of hunters in the field. The Department will not make this recommendation at this time.

DEER	
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Seasons deer – Traditional Bow - Sept 7 th -18 th , Archery Modern Bow - Sept 19 th -30 th , Traditional Firearm – Oct 15 th -23 rd , Modern Firearm – Oct 24 th -Nov 2 nd	WDFW staff considered several variations of the same hunting season structure that you are proposing. The majority consensus by our staff biologists is that deer populations will not be able to sustain this level of harvest pressure and still meet population objectives stated in the Game Management Plan.
My biggest frustration with deer & elk hunting seasons for modern firearm hunters is their early start & finish, & the narrow range of days in the calendar that people are allowed to hunt. I should be able to declare 10 days in a single year where I intend to hunt these animals & go only on those days. As is, we are forced to fit our hunting into a narrow range of days & hunt during a time when hunting conditions are poor.	A later, longer modern firearm general season would likely result in a higher than desired deer and elk harvest that the populations could not sustain. In addition, the Department is tasked with the challenge of providing hunting opportunities for a variety of user groups. In order to do that safely and to minimize the amount of crowding in the field, seasons have to be structured with specific dates and time frames that are the best compromises for both the wildlife resource and the hunters. The proposal that you've suggested is unworkable.
Methow Valley, Okanogan County. Increase either sex hunting permits for all types of weapons & for youth, white tail & mule deer. Open youth hunting as in the past with no special tags or drawing required. Open to all who purchase a license.	Thank you for your comment. We will likely be increasing the antlerless permits in the Methow Valley and Okanogan county to respond to the resource that is available. The Department switched the general season, any deer opportunity for youth to a special permit opportunity because of overcrowding complaints and a higher than desired harvest in some areas. Special permits allow the Department to better direct the hunting pressure and the harvest. The odds of drawing those permits are still very good. The Department will not be recommending going back to an open general season for youth in those areas.
It is well known that WDFW biologists & policy makers have, over the last 20 years, shifted the start of deer & elk seasons up several weeks. I have read WDFW reports that suggest this was done intentionally due to some severe winters in the 80's, which resulted in numerous "winterkills". But, deer populations have recovered & the number of hunters in WA is down since the 1980's, yet the seasons have not been readjusted to coincide with migrations. As you know this reduces the hunter access rates significantly, which represents fewer hunters taking out licenses & spending money in rural communities. The policy is both an economic liability & a disincentive to hunt in WA. It is also, as the WDFW is well aware, an incentive for poachers to break the law. Change the policy...let's hunt deer in late Oct. & reduce the number of poachers.	Your information is not exactly accurate. The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration). Deer hunter numbers and hunter success rates have been relatively stable over the last four years. From 2001 to 2004 deer hunter numbers have ranged from approximately 134,000 to a high last year of 146,000. We are able to provide a wide variety of deer hunting experiences without over-taxing the deer resource. A later, longer general season would likely result in a higher than desired deer harvest that the populations could not sustain.

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In certain areas there seems to be a lot of big 2 pt mule deer bucks. I was wondering about the possibility of special tags for just 2 pts. Generally I hunt in GMU 133 (Roosevelt), but I have also seen/heard of the same sort of thing going on in 136 (Harrington).	The Department is not entertaining any recommendations that would allow special permits specifically for 2-point mule deer. However, some buck permits could be changed from 3-point or better to any buck.
Pressure in the Margaret & Winston Creek units have seen a decline in deer populations over the past 5 years.	Thank you for your comment.
Establish a 2-week late season during Nov. in GMU 136 to take any whitetail deer by modern firearm, archery or muzzleloader. It will not eliminate whitetail but sure will help maintain mule deer habitat	We don't have any information at this time that suggests that an overly aggressive harvest strategy for w-t deer is going to improve conditions for mule deer.
Barring a major winter kill situation, which we all know would devastate & upset the mule deer population, a spike only season should be established for at least a couple years. No larger bucks should be harvested at all.	The Department is not entertaining any recommendations that would allow spike only seasons for deer. There are other ways of improving mature buck survival that are better accepted by the public such as shortening the season.
Youth archery any deer permits.	Permits may not be necessary as there are a wide variety of any-deer, archery opportunities already available in many 400, 500, and 600 series GMUs.
Westside GMU's buck deer 3-point or better	The Department is not entertaining any recommendations that would allow for general season specifically for 3-point black-tailed deer. Because of good cover conditions and adequate buck survival, such a restriction is not necessary.
Try pilot 3-point antler restriction for blacktail deer in Western WA use of crossbow in firearms restricted area	The Department is not entertaining any recommendations that would allow for general season specifically for 3-point black-tailed deer. The crossbow recommendation may receive additional consideration in the future as restricted areas increase.
There is strong support for 2-pt minimum for deer in SW GMU's.	You are correct that many hunters support the 2-point restrictions, but our harvest data does not indicate better survival or mature buck harvest rates than any buck units. Thank you for your comment.
Synchronize the seasons a little closer to rut for deer.	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration).

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Start the general deer season later, to coincide with the rut, as is done in other states. Oct is too early of a start	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration). Other states have fewer hunters and more deer than Washington.
Open up late archery mule deer seasons in Douglas Cnty	The deer population in Douglas Co. is barely meeting post-hunt buck ratio objectives. We will probably need to slightly increase the antlerless harvest and slightly decrease the antlered harvest. The Department won't be recommending longer deer seasons in Douglas County.
Open more 300 GMUs for archery deer only permit tags	When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Open deer & elk season on calendar day i.e. deer Oct. 15	There are at least two factions when it comes to opening day desires. One group would like a predictable date every year regardless of the day of the week and the other group prefers a Saturday opener. We will take your comment under advisement.
Open 300 GMUs for (AHE) master hunter 2 nd deer permits	The intent of the AHE program is to develop a group of service minded hunters to assist the department in addressing sensitive issues and landowner relations. The program was not intended to just encourage hunters to go through the curriculum in order to receive special hunting opportunities.
Only hunt to maintain a balance so animals, such as deer, will get diseases/viruses	The Department manages deer populations to be healthy and viable, preferably at densities lower than those that promote diseases becoming a major issue.
Okanogan modern deer season is too long the kill percentage was way too high running to the end of Oct., season needs to be back to 8-10 days	Thank you for your comment; your recommendation will be pursued as an option for comment next month.
No late buck in Nov-add days to general hunt for deer on Westside	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration).
Move youth hunts to the Northeast portion of the state to assist in the increased harvest of the whitetail population	There is already a wide variety of white-tailed deer hunting opportunity for youth in the northeastern part of the state.

DEER	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Move general deer season in Eastern WA one week later	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration).
Move modern firearm general deer season all of October	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration).
More quality mule deer areas like GMU 290	The Department is looking for more areas that are appropriate for setting up quality deer hunting opportunities. Watch for options available for comment next month.
Methow valley, Okanogan County. Increase either sex hunting permits for all types of weapons & for youth, white tail & mule deer	Thank you for your comment. We will likely be increasing the antlerless permits in the Methow Valley and Okanogan county to respond to the resource that is available.
Make Douglas County modern firearm deer season same number of days as Chelan County	Douglas and Chelan counties are very different and while consistent season dates are important, they may not be feasible. Buck escapement in Chelan County is meeting minimal objectives, but Douglas County escapement levels are struggling.
Keep 3-pt minimum on all mule deer in Eastern WA	Thank you for your comment.
Increase season by 2 days in E. WA mule deer areas. 3 weekends should increase license sales for the weekend bound hunter	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration). Many areas of north-central Washington are experiencing declining buck ratios.
Increase deer take from 1-2 deer in overpopulated areas	The Department is already allowing a fair number of second deer, antlerless opportunities. New areas will be added as appropriate.
Increase buck to doe/bull to cow ratios statewide above Department goals; 40 males to 100 females preseason	The current Game Management Plan is valid until 2009. We will reevaluate that plan when the time comes and determine if any changes are necessary in the population objectives for deer and elk.
Have general deer season in area 329	Objectives for buck survival and harvest in GMU 329 are being evaluated. The intent was to develop a quality hunting opportunity with high mature buck numbers. Typically, permit only hunting allows for that type of management.

DEER	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Get rid of 3 point deer areas in favor of two point or better	The Department is not entertaining any recommendations that would allow seasons with 2-point antler restrictions for mule deer or white-tailed deer to replace seasons with 3-point antler restrictions. We don't see any significant benefits with buck survival at this time.
4 point minimum for modern Okanogan mule deer	The Department is not entertaining any recommendations that would allow seasons with 4-point antler restrictions for mule deer to replace seasons with 3-point antler restrictions. However, we are looking to increase buck survival. You are encouraged to comment on several options coming out for public review next month.
Extend Westside late buck season to include a full week (Mon thru Sun) or 9 days (Sat thru the Sun of the next weekend)	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration). The Department has no plans to extend Westside late buck season at this time.
Extend modern deer season statewide	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration). The Department has no plans to extend modern deer season at this time.
Experiment with the effect of adding additional week days to current deer/elk general seasons for all weapon types	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration). The Department has no plans to extend deer season at this time.
Expand the general deer season in E. WA by one week	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration). The Department has no plans to extend deer season at this time.
Evaluate deer GMU with 3 pt minimum harvest to make certain that 2 pts are not being killed & left behind	A proportion of two point bucks are killed and left with a 3-point regulation. However, the regulation results in increased buck escapement and survival of mature bucks. Our Biologists and Enforcement staff pay close attention to this aspect of antler restrictions and are not reporting any unusually high number of illegal animals killed and left behind.

DEER	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Eliminate the late buck hunt (during the rut) in area 329	We are evaluating the late buck hunt in the Quilomene to determine if it's sustainable and if it's having a negative impact on buck ratios.
Eliminate antlerless deer harvest in GMU 328 & 3-point or better only	GMU 328 is already a 3-point min. unit. The level of antlerless permits offered is usually a function of the need for population control, which is often driven by the number of agricultural damage complaints the Department receives.
Don't increase mule deer buck season until herds are stable	Thank you for your comment. The majority of our mule deer populations are fairly high and stable right now.
Delay deer season due to longer summer & later ruts	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration). The Department has no plans to extend deer season at this time.
Definitely 3-pt or better on whitetail/mule deer in E. WA	Thank you for your comment.
Decrease antlerless white-tailed deer harvest in NE WA	The information available to us does not indicate a need to greatly reduce the antlerless harvest for white-tailed deer in NE WA.
Cut the number of special season down, too many special hunts too much pressure on elk & deer	Thank you for your comment.
Cut back on all doe permits in Okanogan County	This population is at a very high level and has recovered well since the last hard winter in 1997. In order to maintain a viable robust mule deer population that is not running out of resources and forage, we will likely recommend a slight increase in antlerless permits for the Okanogan.
Create trophy tags for mule deer 4-point minimum 5 year draw in selected units Nov 1-Dec 15 for modern firearm	The Department is looking for additional ways to provide more quality mule deer hunting opportunity.
Consider letting people hunt like Idaho does, where a person can hunt deer with archery and if not successful than hunt with modern rifle, than if not successful hunt with a muzzleloader, etc.	Washington switched to the requirement of selecting a weapon type to reduce crowding and maintain the deer populations under the current harvest pressure. Washington's deer resources could not sustain the pressure of ALL hunters having the opportunity to hunt all general seasons. The Department will be providing that type of opportunity as a special permit draw in 2006.
Consider later mule deer seasons in Methow	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration). The Department has no plans to extend deer season at this time.

DEER	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Consider fewer permits issued every 3 rd year in GMU 329 (and other areas where needed) for increased buck ratios & genetic diversity	Thank you for your comment. The Department will take your proposal under advisement.
Consider expanding antlerless deer harvest for older hunter to include mule deer in NE Washington	The Department does look for additional opportunities whenever it can for youth, senior and disabled hunters. However expanding opportunity for mule deer in NE Washington is probably not a viable option due to high success rates and relatively low mule deer numbers compared to historical averages.
Consider allowing multiple use deer tags (gun, bow, muzzleloader) for extra fee	The Department will start doing this for the 2006 season.
Consider a youth hunt offering a free deer tag to first year hunter ed grads	There are a wide variety of deer hunting opportunities for youth offered already. Each year about 10,000 students pass hunter education classes, if they all purchase a deer license, your proposal would cost the state over \$400,000. In any case the loss of revenue would be substantial and would further restrict our ability to manage our wildlife resources.
Archery should be any deer statewide	Archers are more successful than you might think with existing seasons. When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Archery permits any mule deer early season	When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Any mule deer buck early season archery permits	When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Any buck mule deer in E. WA for archery permit holders	When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups.
Antler restrictions in Western Washington for blacktail	While the benefits are difficult to demonstrate, there currently are several GMUs with antler restrictions for black-tailed deer. The Department doesn't have any plans for expanding those restrictions to other areas.

DEER	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Allow youth hunters to harvest either sex blacktail deer on the Westside	The Department does look for additional opportunities whenever it can for youth, senior and disabled hunters. However expanding opportunity for black-tailed deer is probably not a viable option due to high success rates by youth hunters.
Allow the purchase of one tag, deer or elk etc. & the ability to hunt all seasons with the appropriate weapon of that season to fill said tag	The Department will be providing that type of opportunity as a limited permit draw in 2006.
Allow modern firearm deer hunting in the Okanogan during the month of November as an alternative to hunting in October.	The length of seasons and timing of seasons have evolved over time to provide a hunting period that offers a reasonable amount of success for hunters without over-harvesting deer when they are most vulnerable (during the peak of the rut, or post-migration). Shifting the season as you propose would be a highly vulnerable time for deer and would likely result in a higher buck harvest than desired.
All deer & elk seasons closed by November 30 th . Animals need time to recover before winter.	The Department is tasked with the challenge of providing hunting opportunities for a variety of user groups. In order to do that safely and to minimize the amount of crowding in the field, seasons have to be structured with specific dates and time frames that are the best compromises for both the wildlife resource and the hunters.
Address/increase declining elk & deer numbers statewide (due to predation?)	Deer and elk numbers are not declining statewide. For additional information about the status of game populations, please refer to the annual Game Status and Trend Report available on the web at www.wdfw.wa.gov or by calling (360) 902-2515.
Address the major trespassing problem in the Methow Valley during bow & modern deer season	The local sheriff mainly enforces trespass issues, however we'll pass your comment along to WDFW's Enforcement Program as well.
A suggestion for better equality between all weapons type for elk would be to rotate the dates for archery, muzzleloader & modern firearm. As it stands only the archery folks get a chance to bugle an elk & the modern firearm users always get the best weather opportunities. That leaves the muzzleloader folks in the hot dry lousy in between season. Muzzleloader folks also get many less opportunities to hunt deer & elk as the general deer & elk muzzleloader seasons are at the same time & seldom in the same place.	When new opportunities are considered, the equity between the three user groups is evaluated. When a group is identified as lacking we try to provide additional opportunity to bring that group closer to equity with the other groups. If muzzleloaders and modern firearm hunters were allowed a general season hunt during the rut for elk, bull survival would be significantly impacted.

DEER	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Abolish 3-point restrictions on mule deer for modern firearm hunters.	The antler restrictions for mule deer are helping meet post-hunt population objectives. Without establishing other restrictions such as shorter seasons or earlier seasons it is unlikely that we would meet population objectives for mule deer in several Population Management Units without the current antler restrictions. The Department has no plans to abolish 3-point restrictions for mule deer at this time.
Allow either sex deer hunting for disabled hunters	The Department already offers some "Any Deer" and "3-point Min. and Antlerless" seasons for hunters with disabilities. It would be difficult to offer either sex deer hunting on a grand scale without negatively impacting the deer resource because hunters with disabilities have some of the highest success rates of any group.
Consider 2 pt. minimum for black-tail bucks in regions 5&6. Many other hunters & I believe this would produce more quality bucks and a healthier black-tail herd.	The units that are currently restricted to two-point or better bucks are not producing the results you expect. The Department is not entertaining recommendations for additional units with 2-point minimum antler restrictions for b-t deer.
Put a 3 pt. minimum on selected black-tail units	The Department is not entertaining any recommendations that would allow additional for 2-point minimum seasons for b-t deer.
Add an "any deer" weekend to cut the doe to buck ratio down in area 667.	None of our data indicate the need for a significant increase in antlerless harvest in GMU 667.
Remove requirement for hunters to choose which season they will hunt to fill deer or elk tags. Let the hunter hunt with archery equipment during archery season, with muzzleloader equipment during muzzleloader season, etc. As long as the hunter is only harvesting on deer or one elk, what does it matter if the hunter harvests the animal in one season or the other.	Washington switched to the requirement of selecting a weapon type to reduce crowding and maintain the deer populations under the current harvest pressure. Washington's deer resources could not sustain the pressure of ALL hunters having the opportunity to hunt all general seasons. The Department will be providing that type of opportunity as a special permit draw in 2006.
Reopen Eastern WA modern firearm deer season during the modern firearm elk season, with a deadline before the elk season to purchase an elk tag.	A later, longer modern firearm general season would likely result in a higher than desired deer harvest that the populations could not sustain. In addition, the Department is tasked with the challenge of providing hunting opportunities for a variety of user groups. In order to do that safely and to minimize the amount of crowding in the field, seasons have to be structured with specific dates and time frames that are the best compromises for both the wildlife resource and the hunters. The Department will not be recommending the proposal that you've suggested.
Return to 2 pt. (forked horn) for bucks in E. WA as in OR, CA, and other western states.	The Department is not entertaining any recommendations that would change the existing 3-point antler restrictions to a 2-point antler restriction.

SMALL GAME	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Open trapping or hunting seasons for nutria	Nutria is an unclassified species in Washington. As such, they may be hunted or trapped year-around with no bag limit as long as you have a hunting license.
Address closure of management areas for trapping nutria.	See above
Increase restrictions for the harvest of badgers	Badger harvest is being considered as part of the current season setting process. It is important to remember that badgers may only be trapped, not hunted. In 2004, only four badgers were reported as trapped during the season.
Does anyone know the population of badgers? How can restrictions be revoked if the number of badgers is not known for a fact	See above.
Evaluate blacktail jackrabbit populations for potential hunting opportunities	Current knowledge of black-tailed jackrabbits does not indicate enough change in population status to warrant opening the hunting season.
Allow body grip type trapping for coyotes & beavers	Current Washington State Law does not allow body-gripping traps. The Department does not have the authority to make this change.

BEARS & COUGARS	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Would like to see more bear opportunity on long island. You will not hurt the bear population	Unfortunately we do not have a way to assess bear populations on a GMU by GMU level. We do, however, have a large enough sample size to assess bear populations by groups of GMUs, which for bears we call Bear Management Units. We then make recommendations to change harvest based on characteristics of the whole bear management unit. The bear management unit that includes Long Island is within the management objectives outlined in the game management plan, so no changes are planned.
WDFW should not override the voters who have chosen to eliminate hunting with dogs & baiting of bears. Don't make up rules to get around the wishes of the majority of citizens of Washington	WDFW does not have the authority to change state law.

BEARS & COUGARS

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Strictly limit or stop hunting of non-game animals (bear, cougars, etc.)	Bear and cougar are game animals. Hunting seasons for bear and cougar are restricted or eliminated when harvest levels jeopardize the long-term viability of the species. Objectives for managing harvest are identified in the 2003-09 Game Mgmt Plan.
Stop hunting large carnivores such as bears & cougars	Bear and cougar are game animals. Hunting seasons for bear and cougar are managed so that they don't jeopardize the long-term viability of the species.
Stop furbearer species harvests	Furbearers are game animals. Trapping seasons for these animals are managed so that they don't jeopardize the long-term viability of the species.
No spring bear hunts & implementation of non-lethal black bear management methods for reducing timber damage	Non-lethal approaches for addressing widespread timber damage are not very effective or practical. We are experimenting with focused spring bears hunts that with proper training and timing, appear to greatly reduce female harvest while also reducing timber damage.
No spring bear hunting	We experimenting with focused spring bears hunts. After one year of collecting information, these hunts appear to greatly reduce female harvest while also reducing timber damage. We will continue to assess the results of these hunts.
No hunting of black bear or cougars	Bear and cougar are game animals. Hunting seasons for bear and cougar are managed so that they don't jeopardize the long-term viability of the species.
Make baiting bear legal for archery & pistol	Bear baiting, regardless of weapon type, is unlawful bases on state law, not WDFW rule making process.
Instead of shooting bears, why not implement relocation strategies or tranquilize them to see if they have tooth decay (primary reason for bears eating garbage & going on people's property)	Non-lethal approaches for addressing widespread human/black bear encounters are not very effective or practical. Black bears that wander into towns and other human habitation are sometimes captured and moved if conditions are right. However, the effectiveness of this technique may be questionable.
In general there is less public support for hunting cougar, black bear & furbearing animals than most other game species, so please put restrictions on at least these species	You are correct, public support for these species are less than other game animals. But support is still fairly high (~50%). Nonetheless, because public support is less, we minimize changing hunting seasons and, when we do, we provide a through and extended public input process to discuss and address all the public values. In addition, in many cases, changes we do make are on a pilot or temporary basis only, so we can carefully evaluate our decisions.

BEARS & COUGARS

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Implement non-lethal black bear management methods to reduce conflicts	We are experimenting with non-lethal approaches for managing human-bear conflict, such as capture-relocation and hazing. This is a potential option because the number of bears is at a manageable level. In contrast, non-lethal approaches for addressing widespread timber damage are not very effected or practical. So we are experimenting with focused spring bear hunts that with proper training and timing appear to greatly reduce female harvest while also reducing timber damage.
Figure plan for baiting bears in SW units	Bear baiting is unlawful based on state law, not WDFW rule making process.
Extend fall bear hunt to end of archery deer & elk, even if its archery only.	This could be an option for bear units that are below harvest objectives. We assess bear seasons for each bear management unit. In cases when our biological data indicates there is opportunity to expand seasons and provide additional take, we will provide the options to hunters for expanding late or opening early.
Extend bear season to spring hunt in Westside units	We're currently testing the use of spring bear seasons to reduce timber damage in western WA in two pilot areas. Once we conduct that experiment for 3-years, we evaluate the effectiveness and potential for expanding into other areas.
Expand dog use on cougars to let "for hire" dog handlers guide for resident cougar hunters	During the pilot cougar hunt with dogs in NE Washington, WDFW and local County Commissioners have elected to steer away from guiding and develop a structure that focus on trained dog hunters. This is largely because the majority of public input, both recently and during the voter initiative 655, was not in favor of contracted hunters, guiding, and a perception that it encourages trophy hunting.
Expand cougar hound hunting to whole state	We're currently testing the use of dogs to manage cougar and public safety in 5 counties in eastern WA. Once we conduct that experiment for 3-years, we evaluate the effectiveness and potential for expanding into other areas.
Eliminate bear season in Eastern WA in Aug. Weather is too hot. Meat spoils before it can be processed	We assess bear seasons for each bear management unit. In cases when our biological data indicates there is opportunity to expand seasons and provide additional take, we provide the options to hunters for expanding late or opening early.
Delay bear season due to longer summer & later ruts	We assess bear seasons for each bear management unit. In cases when our biological data indicates there is opportunity to expand seasons and provide additional take, we provide the options to hunters for expanding late or opening early.

BEARS & COUGARS

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Create “incentive/bounty” hunts for cougar in problem areas	We’re currently testing the use of dogs to manage cougar and public safety in 5 counties in eastern WA. Once we conduct that experiment for 3-years, we evaluate the effectiveness and potential for expanding into other areas.
Consider ways to manage the exploding cougar population	We’re currently testing the use of dogs to manage cougar and public safety in 5 counties in eastern WA. Once we conduct that experiment for 3-years, we evaluate the effectiveness and potential for expanding into other areas.
Allow use of bait when hunting bear	Bear baiting is unlawful based on state law, not WDFW rule making process.
Allow hunting over bait by permit for Black Bears in E WA	See above response.
Allow cougar hunting year round. There have been 4 reliable sightings in the past 45 days within 1 mile of our house (GMU 673/506)	We’re currently testing the use of dogs to manage cougar and public safety in 5 counties in eastern WA. Once we conduct that experiment for 3-years, we evaluate the effectiveness and potential for expanding into other areas.
Oppose changing Aug 1 opener for black bear. Salmon would be in the rivers and streams, which I believe would result in game wastage. The proposed change to after Labor Day will adversely impact early archery since many bears are harvested prior to Labor Day.	We assess bear seasons for each bear management unit. In cases when our biological data indicates there is opportunity to expand seasons and provide additional take, we provide the options to hunters for expanding late or opening early.
Reconsider the hunting of cougar with hounds in Lincoln county	We’re currently testing the use of dogs to manage cougar and public safety in 5 counties in eastern WA. Once we conduct that experiment for 3-years, we evaluate the effectiveness and potential for expanding into other areas.
Allow baiting of black bears in problem areas	Bear baiting is unlawful based on state law, not WDFW rule making process.
Reinstate the option to bait bears in elk areas, such as the Blue Mtns where bears killing elk numbers are high.	See above response.
Re-instate the use of hound hunting for cougars in elk areas, such as the Blue Mountains where cougar killing elk numbers are high.	We’re currently testing the use of dogs to manage cougar and public safety in 5 counties in eastern WA. Once we conduct that experiment for 3-years, we evaluate the effectiveness and potential for expanding into other areas.
Reopen cougar season to non-dog hunters like it was.	The advantage to using dogs to hunt cougar is once a cougar is bayed; the hunter has an opportunity to determine the sex of the animal. Non-dog hunters cannot do this, and tend to take a larger proportion of female cougars, making managing cougar populations more problematic.

WATERFOWL	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Open up the North Potholes and Frenchman Hills Reserves to duck hunting.	These reserves improve hunting success in surrounding areas, by distributing waterfowl from other reserves. WDFW is currently conducting a review of all reserves in eastern Washington, and these reserves will be included in the review.
Open up more areas to waterfowl hunting	Almost all lands on WDFW Wildlife Areas are open for waterfowl hunting. WDFW is working to initiate a new hunter access program on private lands with emphasis on waterfowl hunting.
Make waterfowl hunting authorizations available online and remove application deadlines.	WDFW is working to provide these authorizations online, without application deadlines, through our new licensing system in 2006.
Remove dusky goose harvest restrictions	The southwest Washington goose management program has been effective in increasing the number of dusky Canada geese. Restrictions on dusky harvest will be reduced if the population continues to increase.
Expand the Canada goose seasons statewide	Canada goose seasons are at the maximum lengths allowed under federal regulations.
Expand Canada goose hunts to decrease nuisance geese in public parks	Canada goose seasons are at the maximum lengths allowed under federal regulations.
Consider hunting geese more days per week in the Columbia Basin	This option was considered in the 1990s but rejected due to public opposition.
Delay duck season by one month because of low success in early season	Some areas of the state have their best hunting in October due to migration patterns and weather conditions. Delaying the season by one month would unnecessarily reduce opportunity.
Review management of wood ducks and low female populations of all ducks	WDFW will continue to monitor the status of wood ducks and sex ratios of all ducks through existing surveys.
Allow the use of electronic and battery powered waterfowl decoys	The Commission restricted the use of electronic and battery powered waterfowl decoys because of concerns about fair chase and hunter ethics.
Remove the crow season and open year round	The crow season is at the maximum length allowed under federal regulations.
Eliminate dove and crow hunting	Existing seasons provide recreation and are not affecting population status for these species.
With seabirds dying in record numbers on the Pacific Coast, consider a moratorium on all sea bird hunting.	Seabirds are not hunted in Washington.

PRIVATE LANDOWNERS	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
WDFW must work to provide increased hunter access to private lands. Look at some of the other states' programs, like Kansas, "Walk in Hunter Access" funded through P-R funds. Or the program used in Montana. Hunter access is key to keeping the sport of hun.	An expanded program was proposed to the Washington State Legislature last session. It passed the Senate and is still in the House. WDFW will again seek passage of this important bill (SSB 5234) during the 2006 session. The bill increases hunting license fees by \$5, with the funds going to an expanded access program. The program will be very similar to those in other states.
Landowners who sell damage tags must give WDFW 50% of the proceeds	The intent of the damage tags is to prevent damage claims and payments. The tags are mostly antlerless tags and have limited economic value.
Area 516 private property is being damaged due to the elk population not being managed. Unit 503 has considerable opportunities most of the area is private	Game management unit 503 was carved out of unit 516 to help address damage. The Cowlitz river bottoms are a historic elk wintering area. As this property is developed, elk have become less welcome by some landowners. The department has many options for dealing with damage and will use them as needed.
Enlist landowners to permit access to CRP for hunting & fishing	The department currently has approximately one half million acres of CRP lands open under various hunter access programs.
Establish a liaison contact to work with private land property owners. This contact would have keys to unlock gates for only the retrieval of downed game by successful hunters	This concept could be incorporated into the expanded hunter access program described above.
Allow ATV use on forest service roads & trails if being used for hunting purpose.	The US Forest Service controls vehicle access on the lands they manage.

EQUIPMENT	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Adding muzzleloader opportunity in GMU 673 & 681 is totally unacceptable.	Thanks for your comment.
All three weapon styles should be allowed I would pay extra its not crowded.	The department plans to recommend to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that in 2006, hunters can put in for a drawing and if successful may purchase such an opportunity for \$150.
Allow 209 primer ignition system for muzzleloader	Options are being developed for muzzleloader equipment. We encourage you to participate in a survey on our web page next month.
Allow archery "any bull" tags to be legal tags in either the early season or late season hunts, not just the early season	That extension would result in greater harvest success, which would result in fewer permits being issued. In past surveys, archers preferred retaining greater permit levels rather than season changes to increase harvest success.

EQUIPMENT

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Allow carrying a side arm when archery hunting, with increase of bear & cougar population.	We will consider the request to carry a side arm. However, bear and/or cougar attacks on deer and elk hunters are very very rare.
Allow center fire, muzzleloader rifles & handguns for fall turkey hunting similar to Montana.	There have been concerns expressed by turkey hunters for wastage and safety. This is not a very frequent request from hunters.
Allow crossbows during modern firearm season.	This has not been identified as a major issue to date, but there has been some discussion about allowing crossbow use in firearm restriction areas. We will consider your suggestion for the future.
Allow hunters to get deer/elk tags with a choice of two weapons (e.g. archery & modern firearm, or muzzleloader & modern firearm) for additional cost	The department plans to recommend to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that in 2006, hunters can put in for a drawing and if successful may purchase such an opportunity for \$150.
Allow hunters to hunt archer, muzzleloader & modern seasons with only one deer & one elk harvested per year. A transport tag would have to be purchased for each season. More time/sport for us, and more revenue for the state.	The department plans to recommend to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that in 2006, hunters can put in for a drawing and if successful may purchase such an opportunity for \$150.
Allow hunters to use gun, bow, muzzleloader for each animal but take only one animal	The department plans to recommend to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that in 2006, hunters can put in for a drawing and if successful may purchase such an opportunity for \$150.
Allow hunters with disability to hunt during all the weapon choice seasons to improve the chances of having someone available to assist them.	This hasn't been identified as a major issue yet. If recruitment of assistants is a concern, then many techniques should be considered.
Allow purchase of a "weapon tag" that allows hunters to use different weapons with purchase of permit – but still only allowing 1 deer or elk a year	The department plans to recommend to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that in 2006, hunters can put in for a drawing and if successful may purchase such an opportunity for \$150.
Allow use of jacketed or modern style bullets for muzzleloaders	Options are being developed for this issue. We encourage you to participate in a survey on our web page next month.
Allow use of mechanical broad heads	Options are being developed for archery equipment. We encourage you to participate in a survey on our web page next month.
Archery deer & elk seasons open the same day	If they opened the same day as the current elk opening date, it would take 7 days away for deer hunting. If the elk season opened sooner, it would increase success and not address the weather issue described previously.
Archery expandable broadhead use	Options are being developed for archery equipment. We encourage you to participate in a survey on our web page next month.
Archery hunts for cows & does should be issued to permit only	If necessary to control harvest levels, they are restricted to permit only.
At no time, in any unit, should modern firearms & archery overlap each other	We work pretty hard at minimizing overlaps, but in some units hunters prefer overlaps rather than one group being eliminated.

EQUIPMENT

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Ban use of high-tech equipment & weapons	Options are being developed for this issue. We encourage you to participate in a survey on our web page next month.
Bow hunters & muzzleloaders should hunt the same seasons as modern firearms	This has been a very effective way to reduce crowding during modern firearm seasons and provide greater opportunity for primitive weapons.
Bow hunting season is too early (weather is still too hot in Sept)	There are late seasons in many areas of the state for archery hunting. Late seasons for mule deer hunting are often not proposed because they are concentrated on winter range and too vulnerable to harvest.
Change late season archery in Okanogan County to spike & two point	Buck ratios in this area have been declining for the past couple of years and this suggestion is likely to make that situation even worse.
Colockum archery season: move later in Sept & early Oct due to heat & animals spoil	That timing would coincide with the peak of rut and may result in excessive harassment of elk during breeding.
Consider "traditional archery" seasons/units for recurve & longbow hunting only	Because units or opportunity would have to be taken from an existing opportunity, this suggestion is no longer being considered for 2006-08.
Consider closing bear & cougar modern firearm seasons that overlap with elk season; encourages too much party hunting	The Fish and Wildlife Commission considered this previously and decided that the restriction is not warranted. They felt that hunters should be allowed to pursue cougar and black bear during deer or elk seasons even if they already filled their deer or elk tag.
Consider combined weapon tags i.e. hunt elk/deer through all 3 seasons for an additional charge. Bag limit remains 1	The department plans to recommend to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that in 2006, hunters can put in for a drawing and if successful may purchase such an opportunity for \$150.
Consider eliminating non-tech weapons, period.	Options are being developed for this issue. We encourage you to participate in a survey on our web page next month.
Crossbows are less effective than modern compound bows but the archery boys have been successful in banning them. Consider their use in a separate season to keep the compound bow people happy, while allowing crossbow people to hunt.	At this point, there has not been much interest in using crossbows, but they could be considered in the future. The hunter season calendar is already pretty full and crossbow use might have to be lumped into an existing season rather than carving out a separate season.
Currently no muzzle loading opportunities are provided for deer or elk unit 516, provide additional opportunities in unit 516	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible.
Cutting late muzzleloader season in unit 578. This is one of the only units we have much of a chance & you have taken that chance away	The restriction was necessary to manage harvest levels and balance opportunity between users.

EQUIPMENT	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Designate crossbows as a modern firearm for handicapped hunters & allow them to hunt in all user group season	Allowing hunters with disabilities to use modern firearms and/or crossbows designated as such during all seasons does not appear feasible or warranted. Seasons and accommodations are available currently that allow hunters with disabilities to achieve similar or greater success than able-bodied hunters.
District 2 needs should not increase archery & modern firearm opportunity	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible.
Do away with picking weapon 1 tag one animal	This has been a very effective way to reduce crowding and provide greater opportunity for primitive weapons.
Do not allow, further technology advancements for any of the weapon types. In fact, in keeping with the department's policy of "quality hunting", seasons should be created or permits expanded for traditional weapons. I also believe that the issue of trying to keep success ratios equal between user groups is wrong. I believe that if the user chooses a more primitive weapon, he or she should be allowed a better chance of success. Total harvest numbers should be used rather than success rates when comparing user groups. Also, the total number should be sex specific, since some of the success rates for user groups are slanted one way or the other.	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible. Obviously, your recommendation would benefit archers and perhaps muzzleloaders, but the committee reviews the impacts on all users when making recommendations.
Don't keep spike only for archery, like finding a needle in a haystack. Put a half-mile buffer zone around the Colockum game reserve for either sex. Any bull, or antlerless only permits for all weapons.	A herd plan for the Colockum elk herd is being drafted and should be available for public comment this fall. What to do with the game reserve will be important part of the discussions.
Eliminate calls, bait, blinds & dogs as hunting aids as they create unfair advantages for hunters	Options are being developed for this issue. We encourage you to participate in a survey on our web page next month.
Eliminate the use of lead shot statewide	The Fish and Wildlife Commission evaluated this issue and decided to evaluate restrictions on a case-by-case basis. Several areas of the state have been made non-toxic shot only for hunting game birds.
Eliminate weapon designation for deer & elk tags-one tag, one animal, so hunters can hunt different seasons with different weapons until they fill their tag	The department plans to recommend to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that in 2006, hunters can put in for a drawing and if successful may purchase such an opportunity for \$150.

EQUIPMENT

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Evaluate the feasibility of adding muzzleloader permit season in GMU 346 that doesn't coincide with other forms of hunting	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible.
Evaluate the reason that many archery permit hunts soon follow rifle permit hunts	If you carefully review the regulations, you will see that doesn't occur very often.
Expand archery opportunity statewide, all GMUs. Promote this to remove the current crowding you have created by allowing only certain areas to be open for elk /deer. This is one of the attractions of drawing more people to archery while preserving the most necessary "choose your weapon" rule	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible. At this point, crowding during the modern firearm seasons is manageable and further archery incentives that encourage hunters to switch weapons may not be necessary.
Expand big game hunting opportunity by allowing hunters to hunt using all legal weapons during each weapons respective season	The department plans to recommend to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that in 2006, hunters can put in for a drawing and if successful may purchase such an opportunity for \$150.
Expand the early archery any bull tag to include the late season as well	That extension would result in greater harvest success, which would result in fewer permits being issued. In past surveys, archers preferred retaining greater permit levels rather than season changes to increase harvest success.
Extend muzzleloader seasons	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible.
Give all 3 user groups (bow, muzzleloader & high-power) the same amount of GMU's	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible.

EQUIPMENT	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Give archery hunters an opportunity to hunt GMU 342	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible. Archery participation and harvest levels are meeting objectives in District 8, which includes GMU 342.
Having hunted with a muzzleloader for the last 10 years, I have seen the number of primitive weapon hunters increase. I have also seen a number of restrictions through property closures, special regulations, etc.	Thank you for your thoughts, we will be developing options on this issue for public comment this fall.
I am totally against items 2i, ii, iii, iv, & vi as I feel they degrade the primitive status of the archery & muzzleloader seasons	We will be developing equipment options for further consideration. We encourage you to make your preferences known to us in reviewing options on the web page next month.
I believe muzzleloaders are now in the same category as modern firearms now. If restrictions aren't put on the advances in their technology, the muzzleloader community will eventually find themselves in the same category as modern firearms. They should remain as a primitive weapon, which most are not.	Thank you for your thoughts, we will be developing options on this issue for public comment this fall.
I disagree with using weapons with scopes. This is completely unfair & one cannot seriously call himself a hunter if he has to use a scope. All hunters call this a game but continue to cheat by using fake animal whistles. If you want to draw in prey, learn how to intimidate the animals with one's own mouth. Animals have zero chance against all this human technology. It is completely unfair. If you want to hunt it should be done with a gun with no scope so that you are required to use your own eyes.	Thank you for your thoughts, we will be developing options on this issue for public comment this fall.
I like getting rid of the ignition needing to be exposed to the elements, & allowing other ignition sources like shot gun primers.	This issue will continue forward in the 2006-08 discussions and the development of options.
I like the fact that I can use muzzleloader for deer & not have huge crowds of people around me. I think changing restrictions to closed ignition & allowing scopes will only bring in more people & cause more problems, & besides if you do that to a muzzleloader, you basically have a rifle.	Thank you for your thoughts, we will be developing options on this issue for public comment this fall.
I like the idea of having optics on muzzleloaders (I just say limit the power from say 1X-3X maximum?)	This issue will continue forward in the 2006-08 discussions and the development of options.

EQUIPMENT

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
I would like to be able to hunt deer & elk with my bow & my rifle. I just moved from Montana where that is allowed if one is willing to buy necessary permits. It gives me more days in the field. The additional revenue created by allowing this would be a boon to your agency & I don't think archery success rates are high enough to negatively impact deer & elk populations. At least it could be tried in some areas. So I could get a tag to be filled with either a bow or a rifle, if I'm successful in getting an elk with my bow then I don't get to harvest one with my rifle. I hate being limited to just choose a single weapon & let another weapon sit idle for a season.	The legislature just created a permit this year that would allow this to occur. The Fish and Wildlife Commission will decide the rules for applying and number of permits available over the next few months. We are anticipating that this type of opportunity will be available during the 2006 season.
I would like to see more units open for muzzleloaders for deer & elk.	If additional opportunities are available in terms of adequate deer and elk populations to support added harvest and muzzleloader hunter numbers or relative success in an area are below the statewide average, then additional units might be added.
I would like to see the elk opportunities expanded in the region 5 & 6 for muzzleloaders.	In most cases Region 5 has provided sufficient opportunities that results in equitable participation and success for muzzleloaders. The issue for Region 6 will continue to be discussed as the 2006-08 recommendations are being developed.
I would really like to see the restriction for all lead bullets for muzzleloaders to go away. There are a lot of bullets out there that perform better & are more efficient than all lead bullets.	Muzzleloader restrictions will continue to be debated in the 2006-08 hunting regulation development process.
I would suggest that you start using more archery hunting as a tool to improve on quality hunting in WA. I hunt Idaho that has a 30-day early archery season. This works well for controlling hunters as well as wildlife. You would do good to look real hard at their seasons as well as how they manage all game and hunters.	We do review what other states are doing and talk with their biologists and managers regularly. Unfortunately for Washington, all other western states are larger, have fewer people (less development), and fewer hunters (not counting California).
Leave bow reduction at 65% let off	We will be developing archery equipment options for further consideration. We encourage you to make your preferences known to us in reviewing options on the web page next month.
Limit muzzleloaders to primitive weapons without scopes, in-line firing or closed ignition systems	We will be developing muzzleloader equipment options for further consideration. We encourage you to make your preferences known to us in reviewing options on the web page next month.
Make muzzleloader regulations primitive again. A muzzleloader that's accurate at 250 yards isn't primitive	We will be developing muzzleloader equipment options for further consideration. We encourage you to make your preferences known to us in reviewing options on the web page next month.
Make so hunters can buy into using all three weapon groups instead of choosing only one	The department plans to recommend to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that in 2006, hunters can put in for a drawing and if successful may purchase such an opportunity for \$150.

EQUIPMENT	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Make the late archery season in Chelan & Okanogan Counties longer	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible. Archer participation and success in both of these districts for deer hunting is meeting objectives.
Make the muzzleloader season a "primitive" hunt! i.e. no in lines, sabots, scopes, etc.	We will be developing muzzleloader equipment options for further consideration. We encourage you to make your preferences known to us in reviewing options on the web page next month.
Manage wildlife based on science, not economics	The use of science in management of wildlife is the primary emphasis of management. Other considerations are appropriate within the bounds of the science.
Mechanical broadheads allow use of a larger cutting diameter & are more consistent in flight with field tips. Allowing use of mechanical broadheads is only going to cut down on the number of animals that are wounded & lost. Lets face it, the majority of bow hunters don't put in the time to figure out how their broadheads shoot compared to their field points. Which I'm not saying is right, but the reality is that's the case. This is why I think allowing the use of mechanical broadheads will not only improve our sport but also the perception by non-hunters.	Archery equipment regulations and the use of mechanical broadheads will continue to be debated during the options phase of developing 2006-08 hunting regulations. You are encouraged to continue providing comments on issues of interest this fall.
Modern muzzleloaders in the modern firearms season only	That is currently the rule for muzzleloaders that do not meet the requirements for muzzleloader seasons.
More lethal weapons, as well as more traditional weapons (i.e. bow & arrow) should be outlawed as it causes unnecessary injury & slower deaths	Killing game as humanely as possible is important to both hunters and the department. The skilled use of weapons by hunter's that take the time to develop and maintain proficiency is the main way to assure a quick and humane kill. The department strongly emphasizes that objective for hunters in our hunter education programs.
More muzzleloader opportunities needed. Less for archery. They have way too many now. They also wound more animals than they kill. I've spoken with several archers that said they "stuck a spike...a cow..." & they were not able to find them. Bad PR for all hunters if this news hits the mainstream media, right?	The department plans to continue providing opportunity for three primary user groups, archers, muzzleloaders, and modern firearm hunters. We will seek to fairly distribute that opportunity based on participation rates and success of each group.

EQUIPMENT	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
More muzzleloader opportunity statewide	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible.
Move archery season from Sept 1-14 to the last two weeks of Sept.	This would coincide with the peak of elk rut and highly vulnerable elk for harvest.
Move archery season to the first two weeks of Oct.	This would mean eliminating or moving muzzleloader seasons in most GMUs.
Muzzleloaders should not be just for damage control, but have the same opportunities as archery & modern	We agree, muzzleloaders should have a variety of opportunities.
My brother is a disabled hunter that hunts with a muzzleloader. He is not able to hunt in the same places a disabled hunter with a modern rifle is. This is wrong in many peoples eyes as a person hunting with an inline muzzleloader only has one shot most of the time & cannot shoot as far with no scope. I have just started to hunt with him as I was a modern hunter & can see that he has less GMU to hunt & that a person that hunts muzzleloader has a harder time in the first place let alone a person with a disability. This is something that needs to be looked at.	We agree with the concept that special opportunities designed for hunters with disabilities should be available for all three-weapon types. This issue will be incorporated as we develop permit recommendations for 2006.
Need primitive only season-flintlock, caplock, Wheellock (round ball only) No inline or bullets of any kind	See above.
Newer muzzleloaders 1970 & newer should be considered modern firearm	Thank you for your thoughts, we will be developing options on this issue for further public comment this fall.
No automatic weapons with easy re-load	Automatic weapons are currently illegal.
No scopes on any of the guns, if this is a game one shouldn't be able to cheat	See above.
No scouting from airplanes 48 hours before you hunt	See above.
No scouting with artificial lights after the season starts	Specific regulations for equipment are open for discussion, but this one has not been a major issue so far.
Open all GMUs to archery	See above.

EQUIPMENT

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Open all GMUs to muzzleloader & archery hunters, that are open to modern hunters	Dividing up the harvestable deer and elk among weapon types is often contentious. The department has worked with representatives from all three groups to develop and monitor equitable opportunity between all the weapon types. The criteria chosen and agreed upon are participation rates and proportionate harvest. So if muzzleloaders make up 10% of elk hunters in the state, then they should make up 10% of the hunters in each of the state's 17 districts. That way you have good distribution of hunters and opportunity across the state. In addition, within each of those districts, the group should be harvesting similar proportions of deer and elk. In this example of muzzleloaders, they should be harvesting about 10% of the elk. Giving everyone the same number of days didn't make sense to the group because it is more difficult to harvest game with primitive weapons.
Open more areas to muzzleloader hunting for elk	Thank you for your thoughts, we will be developing options on this issue for public comment this fall.
Open the snipe season earlier in NE. Sept 1 snipe opener to allow hunting before migratory snipe leave NE WA	The US Fish and Wildlife Service set migratory bird season frameworks. Within their framework, we typically try to set the seasons as long and as late into the year as possible for waterfowl hunting. If we moved the date for snipe to Sept. 1, it would also affect waterfowl and we wouldn't be able to hunt as late elsewhere. Conditions are different across the state and we try to set consistent seasons that benefit the majority of hunters.
Oppose adding opportunity for primitive weapons. Our resources are stretched too thin. A primitive weapon user has current seasons to hunt.	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible.
Outlaw bow hunting	The department considers archery a legitimate and desirable form of hunting.
Outlaw crossbows	They are currently illegal for most hunting; the only exception is for hunters with disabilities who cannot use archery equipment.

EQUIPMENT

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Please re-consider the archery & muzzleloader equipment/seasons. The compound “bow” is as deadly as a 30-30, and the stainless steel, plastic, sabot, in-line “muzzleloader” is as accurate as a modern rifle. Colorado has banned the in-line, & Pennsylvania is a “flintlock only” M/L season. Idaho has a primitive only hunting season. The great state of WA should also have a “primitive/traditional weapon only” season for archery & muzzleloader	The department continues to facilitate discussion on what hunters prefer in terms of equipment regulations. As mentioned previously, the department has several options for managing harvest success. Ultimately the decision on primitive weapon regulations will be developed using hunter preferences and harvest impacts. Adding “primitive weapon” seasons would be very difficult because for the most part, season dates or opportunity would need to be taken from one group or another in order to give it to primitive weapons.
Primitive seasons should be hunted with primitive style weapons.	Thank you for your thoughts, we will be developing options on this issue for public comment this fall.
Primitive weapons? Hell, most hunters I know can't hit their targets with a high-powered scope & both hands! Please don't fill my walking woods with a bunch of drunken fools with egos & arrows!	Thanks for your comment.
Raise minimum arrow weight to 400 grains.	Options are being developed for this issue. We encourage you to participate in a survey on our web page next month
Reduce late season crowding in hunting units that are open to either sex harvesting by opening up more either sex units in the late seasons of primitive weapons.	Depending on the deer or elk population and management objectives, this suggestion may or may not be feasible. We also need to consider other user groups. Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This “Allocation” committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible.
Reduce use of any firearm in hunting	Thank you for your comment.
Same amount off days for all weapon types	Dividing up the harvestable deer and elk among weapon types is often contentious. The department has worked with representatives from all three groups to develop and monitor equitable opportunity between all the weapon types. The criteria chosen and agreed upon are participation rates and proportionate harvest. So if muzzleloaders make up 10% of elk hunters in the state, then they should make up 10% of the hunters in each of the state's 17 districts. That way you have good distribution of hunters and opportunity across the state. In addition, within each of those districts, the group should be harvesting similar proportions of deer and elk. In this example of muzzleloaders, they should be harvesting about 10% of the elk. Giving everyone the same number of days didn't make sense to the group because it is more difficult to harvest game with primitive weapons.

EQUIPMENT	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Set hunting season dates ONLY & let the hunters decide their choice of equipment. Certain equipment restrictions are okay, i.e. 243-caliber minimum for big game, bow/arrow weight, etc. etc. Firearm restrictions would still apply where necessary.	The department could ignore equipment restrictions as a way to manage deer and elk harvest. Other restrictions such as season length and timing could be used to manage harvest success. However in the past, hunters have preferred equipment restrictions rather than shorter seasons or seasons that are timed when animals may be less vulnerable.
The archery season in the Colockum should be 2 weeks later in Sept. because of hot weather. Meat spoilage issues.	The archery elk season was delayed by a week in the 2003-05 hunting regulation package. Another delay will place the season in the middle of the elk rut. Excessive harassment by hunters might disrupt breeding.
The low bull escapement in GMU 530 is largely due to the early muzzleloader season. Moving the muzzleloader season to another GMU won't fix the problem & would be unacceptable to many users.	Thank you for your thoughts, we will be developing options on this issue for public comment this fall.
The muzzleloader season was a great way to spread out the hunters more & lots of people took it up because of the good opportunities it once had. Many of those opportunities have been taken away as muzzleloaders have turned into modern firearms. Regulate the type of muzzleloaders allowed back to primitive weapons & then give them back some opportunities.	So far, the department has not restricted opportunity for muzzleloader hunters as a result of advancing technology in muzzle loading firearms. However, that may be a future concern if success rates increase as a result of improved technology.
There should be a muzzleloader season in the Okanogan areas later in the season that you don't need to draw for	Beginning with the 2003-05 hunting season package, we worked with citizen representatives from each of the weapon groups to more fairly provide opportunity across the state. This "Allocation" committee continues to suggest modifications, which will be included in department recommendations where feasible.
Traditional muzzleloader flintlock, percussion cap (antique only) season	Thank you for your thoughts, we will be developing options on this issue for public comment this fall.
Wall to wall people around the reserve, is wrong. Only people with permits in this area can have weapons.	See above response.
We would like to be able to use all 3 weapons (modern, primitive & bow)	The legislature just created a permit this year that would allow this to occur. The Fish and Wildlife Commission will decide the rules for applying and number of permits available over the next few months. We are anticipating that this type of opportunity will be available during the 2006 season.
Western WA modern firearm season for deer should see a possible 3-point or better in some GMU's	Currently buck escapement appears to be meeting our objectives in most cases. The two-point restriction in some western Washington GMUs does not seem to be improving buck ratios or hunter satisfaction. If the intent of this suggestion is to increase opportunities for mature buck harvest, there are other ways to do that. It is not clear however if most hunters would support that intent.

OTHER	
COMMENTS	RESPONSES
You should not use “districts” when asking for polls such as this. The general population knows “counties” & “GMU”, but they don’t know the definition of “district” & it is difficult for occasional users to find on your website. Step out of your shells & realize you are addressing people who do not know your definitions as you do!	Thank you for your comment; we will be more explicit in describing the options/alternatives in the future.
While I am not against hunting animals, I believe the job of WDFW is not only to look into expanding hunting, but also in expanding “hunting” that does not involve killing animals. I would like to see children for example, encouraged to find & observe animals in the wild – of course with low impact to the environment. Discovering, observing, photographing wildlife is as exciting to many of us as hunting is. Helping WA citizens learn about animals without killing them is also the job of the WDFW.	WDFW has an active watchable wildlife program; our web site at www.wdfw.wa.gov better describes what this program does. There are also several wildlife cams that provide exciting ways to view wildlife that are not available to most citizens. The intent of the particular survey you participated in was to provide input on WDFW’s development of hunting seasons.
Your so called “citizen panel” needs to represent the 95% of the WA residents who don’t hunt. It is pastime for the WDFW to start protecting our wildlife instead of catering to special interest groups who only want to kill our state’s wildlife for so-called “sport” or profit. Please stop the war on wildlife!	The citizen panel referenced in the survey is the Game Management Advisory Council. The department also has other advisory councils to address other fish and wildlife interests. While five to seven percent of Washington residents purchase a hunting license each year, many more have hunted and consider themselves hunters.
We really need to have a statewide elk tag. The east/west tag system is wrong. Just like not being able to bait bears or hunt cougars with dogs. “YOU” people need to manage our wildlife resources & quit leaving it up to the tree hugging public on the coast (by the way, I live in Olympia myself). Don’t send it to the voting booth, manage it guys. That is what you are paid to do. Make the tough calls. I would much rather it came straight from you & have to deal with it than having PETA & the humane society shove it down my throat & then dance on my grave cause they can out vote us with some B.S. commercials. We (the sportsmen & women of WA) need you to take back our wildlife management & leave Joe Q. Public out of it, I am very confident that you can do just fine. Thank you for your time & efforts out there on the front lines.	<p>The idea for a statewide elk tag is not workable. It is likely to create worse drawing odds for branch bull permits in eastern Washington; greater crowding in southwest Washington; and greater crowding in the Yakima and Colockum elk herd areas.</p> <p>Wildlife belongs to all of Washington’s citizens and there is a state constitution and governing structure designed to consider the needs and opinions of all state citizens. We think the key to resolving public conflicts over wildlife management is education and greater understanding.</p>

OTHER

<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
We are among the over 90% of Americans who don't mutilate animals for "fun" (hunting)! After reading all of these "issues", I can't tell you how disgusted I am with your preoccupation with mutilating & killing animals that feel the same pain as we do! How can you possibly justify inflicting mortal injuries & pain on some being that wants to live as much as you do? Although you give the excuse of "overpopulation" of wildlife or "destruction of crops", you must know that there are humane alternatives to bloodthirsty killing! Money from the sale of purposeful killing equipment doesn't justify such archaic brutality! We disagree with the move to increase hunting & reducing restrictions. We are in favor of reducing hunting & increasing restrictions as well as increased monitoring of hunting areas.	The purpose for the particular survey you commented on was to determine issues to address for hunting regulations. The department's mandate from the legislature is to preserve, protect, and perpetuate wildlife and to provide wildlife related recreation including hunting. While ensuring the perpetuation of wildlife, we develop hunting seasons and regulations and we conduct opinion surveys to help determine the issues, seasons, and regulations that are preferable to the public. We understand that some citizens do not support hunting, however a survey conducted in 2002 indicated that 82% of Washington citizens support legal, regulated hunting and only 12% disapproved.
WDFW needs to remember the sportsmen of this state pay their wages & we expect hunting opportunity, not more closures & not more "reserves" that tend to benefit only a few well-heeled "sportsmen". Hunting & fishing need to be encouraged, not regulated to death. Now it takes a lawyer to read the regulation books & woe to the poor schlump who reads it wrong. Wake up!	We are continuing efforts to make the hunting regulations more understandable. There are many issues that must be addressed which can make regulations complicated. Standardized, simple regulations would often be conservative because they would need to accommodate local issues or limited populations with minimal risk of hunting impact.
Two areas catch my attention. One is the ease at which hunters can get around in certain areas because of a lack of road closures, creating a hunter behind every tree type situation. The Colockum is a prime example. Bumping & Naches are two others.	Some support road closures and others do not. We are looking to balance access with resource management needs. The department plans to develop road management plans for both of these areas over the next couple of years.
I have observed first hand the carelessness of some hunters & their ill preparedness while hunting. Three hunters on foot, out of shape, shot three deer in the upper slopes of the cascades & were unable to pack them out the 8 miles down the trail. Instead much of it was wasted. Gave up hunting years ago.	Thank you for your comment; we feel that most hunters are responsible and understand the importance of preparation for hunting.
How can you regulate the number of animals taken in a given area if you don't regulate the number of hunters? You can't. Oregon's permit only system is working even though it wasn't very popular in the beginning. It makes it possible to manage the number & ratio's you decide on for each area. Bottom line is, your first priority should be managing the fish & wildlife in a scientific way that will bring the numbers back to healthy quality levels, NOT managing them for the maximum dollars.	The most common ways to manage harvest are through bag limits, season length, season timing, antler and sex restrictions, and hunter effort. A permit system does make managing hunter effort very simple, however the majority of Washington's hunters want to be able to hunt every year. They have consistently asked for other restrictions before going to permit only hunting.
Thanks for the opportunity to be involved	Thank you for getting involved.

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COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.	Thank you.
Thank you for sending this survey, but I don't think I am qualified to have the proper comments.	Thank you.
Than you for providing me with the opportunity to comment. In the future, this comment process would seem like less of a sham if WDFW did the following: (1) don't couch all of the options in terms that non-hunters might not understand; (2) don't provide a list of options that consists of almost nothing more than various ways to increase hunting; and (3) do present lists for public comment that provide an opportunity for the public to indicate they'd like to further restrict hunting.	As mentioned previously, this was a survey on hunting issues. We will work on using "plain talk" so that everyone understands the options better. It is important to remember that the Washington legislature has given the department the mandate (RCW 77.04.012) to maximize hunting recreation so long as it doesn't impair the resource.
Thank you for continuing to strive for the best opportunity for each user group & managing quality game.	Thank you for your comment.
Some applicants have 8 or more permit applications & have not drawn a permit while others are drawn every year (and there are some) or every other year. This is grossly unfair & must be changed. After a certain number of applications a permit should be granted.	The situation you describe is merely the result of random chance. Sometimes random chance is not perceived as very fair if you have not been drawn, but it is the same chance for everyone. We did go to the weighted point system some years ago, but it still is a random drawing and even with weighting some are not drawn for a long time.
Since less than 10% of WA residents hunt on a regular basis & hardly any are dependent solely upon hunting for sustenance, you need to take the other 90+% of WA taxpayers' views into consideration. We are already subsidizing the meat industry to the point where tons of meat is being wasted in grocery stores across the country – in an overcrowded world; hunting is becoming a luxury that is dangerous due to accidents & failure of maintaining the ecosystems in a decent balance. I, as a taxpayer, do not want anymore hunting in my public lands. I want the treaties enacted with Native tribes to be honored to the full extent of the law, which allow for traditional levels of hunting & let the others go to shooting ranges to get their thrills.	The Washington legislature has given the department the mandate (RCW 77.04.012) to maximize hunting recreation so long as it doesn't impair the wildlife resource. We understand that some citizens do not support hunting, however a survey conducted in 2002 indicated that 82% of Washington citizens support legal, regulated hunting and only 12% disapproved.
I think since the weather has been running hot & dry into hunting seasons for years, you should consider making all hunting seasons two weeks to a month later. Fire danger & dust would be lessened.	The archery elk season was delayed somewhat in 2003. The problems with early openers seem to have subsided somewhat in recent years. If all seasons were shifted later, the modern firearm seasons for mule deer and elk would occur during or after migration and the animals would be too vulnerable to harvest.
Simple instructions in the regulations & even this paperwork would be a great help to go along with my request for later permit applications.	The timing of permit applications is a constant debate. Some want it earlier and some want it later. The current system seems to work fairly well for the majority of hunters.

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COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Restrict game management decisions by non hunt/fish pastries i.e. peta, husa, etc.	Wildlife belongs to all of Washington's citizens and there is a state constitution and governing structure designed to consider the needs and opinions of all state citizens. We think the key to resolving public conflicts over wildlife management is education and greater understanding.
Please use WDFW to conserve WA wildlife & natural resources & do not allow them to be abused by a small percentage of people who enjoy killing. Very few people have to hunt for food & if they do, should be allowed to do so. WDFW could well use its resources on relocating animals whose habitat has been destroyed by development & education of humans on how to co-exist with the natural world. None of the state's resources should be used to raise & then kill any species. More money should be spent on wildlife rehabilitation & education centers. The department could & should use its resources to make this state a showplace. It has more natural resources than any other state.	See previous responses regarding the department's mandate from the legislature. Most populations of Washington's game animals are very healthy. Relocating animals into the habitat and home ranges of others is seldom effective or an efficient use of resources. The capture and relocation technique can be useful with rare or limited populations and the department continues to use the technique in those situations. At this point the number of facilities (e.g. zoos, universities, and rehabilitation centers) has not been especially limiting or a significant problem.
Please examine the neighboring states on their hunting/game mgmt before initiating new regulations or changes. Quality hunts for trophy animals should be managed for aggressive hunters who want to earn their game without a lot of competition.	We are continually communicating with biologists and managers from neighboring states regarding management strategies and experiences.
Per WDFW 2002 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the majority of the public is opposed to trophy hunting, youth hunting & state encouragement of hunting. Please serve the public interest in these areas.	The plan that resulted from the EIS you reference details the strategies the department is using to address the public concerns. The options developed are reflective of those concerns and you are encouraged to participate in future surveys on the agency's web site at www.wdfw.wa.gov .
Offer special hunts, permits, tags & the likes to volunteer workers that help improve, manage and/or maintain forestry, wildlife, trails, etc. Base it on hours volunteered, the more hours put in, the better the privileges. These hours can be group or community hours that are supervised & hours logged. Examples may include manage ore clean trails, plant trees, maintain parks by cleaning, painting, & landscaping, replace or install new signs in parks or forest. Since budget cuts, use us, people that use the parks, national forests, etc. to do things & offer hunters, fisherman, and boaters' special privileges.	At this point, the department is blessed with strong support from volunteers. We generally receive many offers of assistance. If the need for volunteers becomes more problematic, incentives may be considered in the future.

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<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Non-native species represent one of the greatest threats to native ecosystems. Just look at the current problem with nutria. Please don't bring in ANY non-natives for ANY reason. The state will most likely need to spend even more money in the future trying to deal with the problems that non-natives can produce. If people want to hunt animals that aren't native to this state, they need to hunt elsewhere	Some non-native species have been very detrimental to native wildlife and others have not. Some non-native species have been very beneficial to the citizens of the state. We do need to be cautious and carefully evaluate the benefits and risks prior to introducing additional non-native wildlife.
No new hunting programs. It's not the department's role to encourage hunting. It's fiscally irresponsible for the department to spend limited resources on hunter recruitment while state & national trends demonstrate that hunting is on the decline.	See previous responses regarding the department's legislative mandate. It is also important to remember that much of the funding for wildlife conservation in this state and in the nation comes from hunters.
My preference is that hunting would be banned altogether. There's certainly no need for it; herds will self manage. But since that's not a reality, trapping, bow hunting, blinds, the use of dogs, calls & decoys should all be banned. At least make it somewhat fair for those at our mercy.	Options are being developed to address the use of equipment for hunting. You are encouraged to participate in future surveys to determine the preferences for regulations.
It seems that almost all of the hunting season issues above address expanding access to animals, increasing allowable quotas, increasing the level of weaponry involved, expanding kill seasons. I find expanding or increasing any of the above is detrimental & unnecessary. Our human population is expanding & continues to infringe on the wildlife habitat. If anything, logic dictates finding ways to further protect wildlife & habitat. Hunting & weaponry should be restricted more. If wildlife is going to be "managed" we need to find new ways to co-exist with it in the future. All hunting should be monitored as closely as possible. I know I am not alone in the above beliefs. Please consider this side of the situation & exercise caution in your decision-making.	Please see previous responses to address parts of your concerns. You are correct about the wildlife impacts of our expanding human population and necessary infrastructure. Hunting will continue to be managed within the confines of available game population levels and habitat constraints. The funding provided by hunters will also be used to help determine how best to live with and sustain wildlife over the long term. At some point, all of the citizens of the state who have a strong interest in wildlife, whether they hunt or not, will need to join together to influence the decisions that will determine whether wildlife will remain an important and healthy component of Washington.
It is imperative that these issues be addressed with transparency to the public. It isn't acceptable to include the minority in making decisions concerning wildlife.	The very premise of transparency in government means that all opinions are heard and considered in making decisions. The department's challenge is to let everyone know what we heard and to provide the rationale for the decisions we make.

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COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Instead of imposing a \$10 find for not reporting, why not impose no new tag until they make a report? Does imposing a \$10 fine get you the information you want, or just \$10?	Part of the answer to your question is that it is important that the report be received on time, which is January 31 st . Reports received after that can be used for some things, but we set seasons and make permit adjustments in April. We need to know how the previous year's regulations and permit levels affected harvest before we recommend changes. We do think the \$10 fine will improve compliance, but we asked for the authority to adjust the fine up to \$50. The idea was to set the fine at a high enough level that hunters would be motivated to report. It has been suggested and we considered not allowing the purchase of a hunting license if a hunter had not reported the previous year, but recognized that is pretty onerous. We decided to try a fine instead.
In these proposals, there is far too much emphasis on hunting issues than on conservation issues. It's ludicrous to have in the same survey issues about adding more bear & cougar hunts, & addressing a nuisance deer population. Killing more carnivores is not going to help bring deer herds into control! This survey needs to cover broader conservation issues, and be aimed for comment at the general public instead of at a small minority, the hunters. Adding more days onto the hunting season is insane. I enjoy the outdoors for the peace & tranquility. I can't even do that during hunting season for fear of getting shot. I just hold my breath & pray that some idiot city person hunter doesn't decide one of my horses is an elk. Or just plain doesn't care. One of your proposals might as well just be letting five year olds hunt grizzly bears with AK-47s.	Please see previous responses. In addition, it is very important to remember that hunting is far safer than many other outdoor activities including horseback riding.
In my opinion, hunting pressure drops off dramatically for deer/elk after the first week (except weekends) for both rifle & archery (most people are limited in the amount of vacation time off work), so it would be interesting to explore the effect of adding week-days to the current seasons. (Perhaps retrospective data is available from the 1980's when, for example, rifle seasons were longer for deer). This provides opportunity for a higher quality hunting experience (e.g. less crowding) for those who choose to avoid the crowds & hunt later in the season. The offset, of course, is a longer overall harassment period for animals over the season & perhaps more enforcement work LEOs.	We have considered this proposal, but the data indicate that each day added to the season results in some level of increased harvest. In most cases, we are within our population objectives and not thinking that significant expansion can be accommodated.

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COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Keep the anti-hunters (bunny huggers) out of the loop of managing hunting & game. They just want to stop hunting & we all know that this is not good for the managing of wildlife.	Please see previous responses.
Modern & archery hunters tend to get the best times to hunt when animals are in the units open. There are units open for “any elk that have very few animals & mostly private property. These are not good hunting opportunities	We are attempting to ensure some level of fairness in the opportunities for all users across the state. You are encouraged to participate in future surveys to determine preferred hunting season options.
Overcrowding is a problem because few units are open	We have worked pretty hard to reduce crowding, but if there are specific problems, we can continue to make adjustments.
I understand the complex problems WDFW faces in attempting to provide regulations to satisfy all users. Your current season structure in SW WA is working. If it's not broke, don't fix it!	Thank you for your comment.
I don't have any problem with the Indians being able to hunt, but I think they should follow the same rules & regulations as other hunters, i.e. only 3-point or better in areas set aside for that, not cows, calves or any bull. There are too many instances of just shooting into a herd & what falls they take. If it runs off, so be it. That is so unethical. I don't care if the state gave each one of them a free license & tags each year, but when they filled those they were done	The treaties provided that tribal members could continue to hunt in open and unclaimed lands. By reference that means they can set their own regulations. We are working toward more cooperative management with the tribes related to harvest and hunting. It is important to remember that culturally, there are many differences in beliefs. What is important to one culture may not be important to another. We think that what is most important is that we work together to ensure healthy game populations and a sharing of the available harvest within the bounds of the treaties.
I believe that Native Americans should have the same regulations as any hunter in Washington state. No excessive tag limits or different seasons.	See above response.
I disagree with hunting because human beings (mostly men) have destroyed the predators like the cougars, bears, grizzlies & especially the wolves; we now have to control the deer population. I think there should be tighter limits. If you hunt all the bull elk, then they can't repopulate a strong species, & you are left with only the weak.	Please see previous responses. Bull ratios are very important to elk management and the department carefully manages harvest to ensure adequate numbers of bulls to maintain strong viable populations.
How can you possibly manage our state's wildlife harvest with Indians netting rivers & killing game at will?	Please see previous response regarding tribal hunting.
Have more programs available for volunteer wardens/game management officers. I'd like to help monitor activity/police areas where your presence is low—almost everywhere.	This is available, please contact WDFW's enforcement program for more information.
First the WDFW needs to change the way they manage wildlife by increasing & improving the amount of game available to hunt. Male to female ratios need to increase statewide 40/100. Out of the 40, only 20 are breeding stock.	We are working to manage game population levels within the constraints of available habitat. Male to female ratio objectives necessary for maintaining healthy reproductive herds are being met in most cases.

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COMMENTS	RESPONSES
If there is an over harvest, why not trap & transport just like was done when the species was originally introduced?	In some cases, we are continuing to trap and translocate game species to increase populations where appropriate.
Consider the fact that we are the cause of the decline in certain animal species, our own overpopulation, & hunting won't help even it out. So I say put more restrictions on it unless we are to hunt ourselves.	Please see previous responses.
What is the need for a fall permit?	Special permits allow for more careful regulation of harvest levels.
Clarify why GMU's 578 & 588 are listed as western units for deer & elk but as eastern units for bear.	It mainly has to do with developing understandable regulations that achieve the population and harvest objectives for those species.
As a conservationist I don't see that this list reflects what I care about. It seems very much skewed toward improving "harvest" & expanding hunting seasons on various species. I don't think this is the direction we should be moving in as a state or as a country. I would like to see increased restrictions on hunting in general, especially of non-game species. WDFW's role should be to protect wildlife, not help hunters attract more people to their "sport"	This was a survey about hunting season issues. We conduct a variety of other surveys for other important conservation issues as well.
Extra hunting opportunities to encourage youth interest in the sport generates little more than revenue for the state. It is the responsibility of family members & sportsmen associations to nurture & establish interest in hunting sports	We agree that families should decide their interest in hunting and nurture it as applicable. The department provides opportunities for families and individuals to choose.
WDFW should stop spending taxpayer money promoting hunting	Very little taxpayer funds are used to manage game species and hunting. Most of these funds are generated from hunting license sales.
WDFW should NOT be looking for ways to help the disabled, elderly, or other physically challenged people hunt. Hunting is not a right for anyone	The department does have an obligation to provide hunting opportunities for all of Washington's citizens; it is required by state law (RCW 77.04.012).
Utilize a split tag, like Idaho	We will look into Idaho's regulations further, but in the past, we have not seen significant benefits from adopting split tags.
Trophy hunting is cruel & barbaric	Thank you for your comment.
There's virtually no support for providing special youth hunting opportunity as most citizens realize this is dangerous for all parties involved.	Hunting is a very safe outdoor activity compared to most others. Past opinion surveys indicate that the public is split on whether they support special youth hunting opportunity.
There should be no use of public funds to raise birds or animals for people to then hunt & kill. Even if it were only an issue of money, it is a waste of resources. It is also called "canned hunting" & is not something a civilized society enjoys.	Thank you for your comment; hunting license fees fund the production and release of pheasants.
Take away all special hunting rights for Indians.	They are guaranteed by Federal treaty.
Stop the introduction of non-native species for hunting purposes	Please see previous response to this comment.

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<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Stop hunting in any area where the population in question is not stable	The department always manages in a manner to conserve and maintain healthy wildlife populations.
Stop hunting all predators, as the removal of one large predator throws off the entire population of prey animals	See above response.
Stop giving hunting permits for trophy animals	Special permits are used to carefully regulate harvest levels. What a hunter harvests is up to them as long as it is a legal animal. We have found that the definition of trophy is different depending on your personal perspective.
Special permit apps should limit to one hunting unit only, pick your poison!	Your suggestion has not been widely supported by others and is not necessary for resource management.
Set a max number of permit application numbers before awarding a permit	Permit levels are carefully established and in order to be fair to everyone wishing to apply, there are no limits to the application numbers.
Revise rules: NO dog use to hunt any species	The use of dogs for hunting is very traditional and important to many hunters. Wildlife population protection and control of harvest can be managed in many ways.
Open youth hunting as in the past with no special tags or drawing required. Open to all who purchase a license.	The use of special permits has allowed the department to better distribute hunters over available units and better control harvest levels.
Mandatory licenses & tags purchased by starting date of selected season. No tags or licenses after opener.	These controls are not necessary to manage hunters or harvest.
Make the GMU 588 an eastside unit	That is being proposed as one potential option.
Make special authorizations available online using WILD ID to track	We are working on that suggestion and expect it to be available next fall.
Make some sort of make up days if the woods are closed for the early archery season	There are many other options for hunting, even if private lands are closed for a few days early.
Make permit drawing on 3-point or better in late archery	The department plans to continue providing opportunity for three primary user groups, archers, muzzleloaders, and modern firearm hunters. We will seek to fairly distribute that opportunity based on participation rates and success of each group.
Make draw dates earlier for special hunts & results published earlier	It is difficult to do both, because we collect harvest information in January, conduct some population surveys in March and set permit levels in April. We are providing the hunts and results about as fast as possible now.
Lower non-resident tag prices. My family was born in Seattle but we were forced to move to Michigan but we still come out each year to hunt	At this point, it has been the policy of the state of Washington to provide hunting opportunity primarily to residents. We tend to have more hunters and less land base than all other western states.
Keep hunting regulations simple	We will continue to keep them as simple as possible while providing opportunity.
Keep hunting fair for the animal	Fair chase is an important concept to hunters and is often incorporated into regulations by hunter request.

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<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Increase penalties for hunters that do not turn in hunting results on time	Beginning this year, hunters who do not report on time will receive a \$10 fine when they go to purchase next year's license.
Increase incentives for sportsman-hunters to turn in poachers for small game as well as big game	We will consider this suggestion for the future.
Improve access to Chukar hunting areas throughout the state	The majority of chukar hunting is on public lands that are accessible now.
Implementation of humane & non-lethal wildlife management techniques	These are implemented wherever practical.
I feel that there should be more drawn for a special permit in archery & muzzleloader late season hunts. Entry numbers such as 10 permits for Big Bend, I believe it GMU 242 is too low. I feel it should still be a privilege to be drawn & the likelihood of seeing another hunter should be low. I would venture to guess that about 20% of current applicants should be drawn. So maybe 50 permits for Big Bend for example of a chance to be	We try to balance the permit levels with the number of animals available for harvest, landowner concerns, etc. We will consider your suggestion further.
I do not want my tax dollars to support the mindless slaughter of animals	Tax dollars are not used for management of hunting.
Hunting should be the last resort. Habitat preservation, education & non-lethal methods should be the first priority	Please see previous responses.
Hunting is declining – let it!	Thank you for your comment.
Hunter education instructors have no special options. Same as everyone else	This was a new incentive provided last year to reward and encourage active instructors. We intend to continue recommending the permits and will review and adjust incentives if they prove to be undesirable in the future.
How fair is it, to put muzzleloader elk hunter in deer units after, this unit where open for either sex elk during modern firearm season. Well its not fair or equal treatment	We need to review this situation to determine if a change is needed.
Give low income hunters (especially with families) greater preference in getting licenses	We are not sure this suggestion is feasible. We assume you mean permits, because licenses are available to everyone. If you are mainly talking about antlerless deer permits, the odds are that hunters are drawn for them about once every two years, which are pretty good odds already.
Focus on restoring ancient predator/prey relationships rather than providing more opportunities for trophy hunters	This will be difficult to do over the broad landscape given Washington's human population level. Large predator recovery will be accommodated where possible.
Focus on non-lethal solutions for nuisance animal	We provide a variety of recommendations for nuisance animal resolution.
Extend big game & migratory hunting hours	The hunting hours currently established are pretty liberal now. At times it can be difficult to see well enough to shoot safely early or late.

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<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Explain hunting in a “refuge”	The US Fish and Wildlife Service established refuges to protect key habitats. Most refuges were historically established to provide important wintering areas for migratory waterfowl although many others have been purchased to protect other species and they are all important to many wildlife species. Portions of those refuges are open for hunting when compatible. In fact, hunting is one of six established priority uses of refuges. It is important to remember that hunters through the purchase of Federal Migratory Bird Stamps have provided much of the long term funding for the purchase and management of refuges.
End youth only hunts & provide all hunters with more draw opportunities	The majority of hunters strongly support providing youth permits and hunting opportunities.
Eliminate youth hunts except in whitetail areas where an over abundance of animals exist	See above response.
Do not start any hunting seasons before November to protect recreationists	It is not feasible under the current hunting season structure to delay the start of hunting seasons until November. It is also not necessary. Hunting continues to be one of the safest outdoor activities, so the issue is mainly one of conflicting uses of a site. A survey conducted in 2002 of the general public did not indicate much conflict between hunters and other recreation. However, there are many specific situations where conflicts are evident. In those situations, WDFW does seek to balance the needs of all users.
Do not allow special tag applicants to receive a point if they do not turn in hunting information	This would only penalize about one third of the hunters who are late with reporting.
Consider revising “Incentive Permit Drawing” for hunters submitting reports w/in 10 days to a “weight point permit drawing” system	This may be desirable in the future, but has not been considered at this time.
Consider prohibiting use of two-way radios for “all” big game hunts	This is one of the options being proposed.
Consider opening more CRP land to “feel free” hunting. Much still opened	Key hunting areas will be prioritized for expanded hunter access including land signed up under the CRP programs. The priority will be to open these key areas as feel free to hunt or register to hunt.
Consider moving the date of draw hunts at least a month earlier to allow hunters more time for preparation & planning for that life of a lifetime	The timing of permit applications is a constant debate. Some want it earlier and some want it later. The current system seems to work fairly well for the majority of hunters.
Eliminate all youth hunting programs to reduce violence in school	To my knowledge, there is no relationship between hunting and school violence.
Educate youth to stop hunting of any animal	Hunting is an important tradition and method of managing wildlife populations.
Add more youth hunting opportunities.	They are under consideration, thank you for your comment.

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<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
64% of Washington State doesn't think it is the WDFW's role to encourage participation in hunting, & while a majority of hunters do think it is the Department's role, a surprising 39% disagree. So please encourage non-lethal & injuring practices like hiking, camping & sightseeing.	Please see previous responses to this issue.
How does increasing number of permit increase quality of hunting? It simply increases number of hunters. If you want quality, start to "regulate" by enforced education of firearm use & handling, & education of long-term ramification of you call "management".	The number of hunters at a given time and reasonable opportunity to harvest game are usually the parameters that hunter place on the definition of quality. So the department must carefully consider permit numbers in each unit as well as how long the season extends.
Address special raffle/auction tag compliance with public notification requirements.	This is addressed through the Commissions rule making process.
Consider an emphasis on PREVENTING "damage"? Enforce your own rules better—it'll take creativity under your current government, but I'm watching the behavior or hunters getting less responsible with each generation.	Damage management is a key issue for managing the future of wildlife/human conflict and wildlife population levels. Ideas to prevent damage and nuisance problems are always a higher priority than addressing a particular landowner's current problem. This will be a key initiative for the agency in 2006-07.
Why not "manage" the entire state with such common sense?	The state is managed within the first priority to maintain sustainable populations while attempting to maximize hunting recreation.
What if there is a catastrophe & the population is decimated in less than 3 years? No, is any limit set by evaluating the flux annually?	Yes, annual adjustments are made to permit levels and for emergent situations.
Consider coordinating partridge opener in SE corner of state with Idaho/Oregon	We have and will continue to review other western state's regulations.
Close more roads	While not a part of the season setting process, this action is being considered in many parts of the state where necessary. Alternatively, some areas have become too restricted and the department is looking at ways to increase access.
Carefully evaluate environmental & species impact before loosening any restrictions on hunting.	This is routinely conducted.
Because hunting for the purpose of obtaining a trophy is clearly not supported by the general public, please restrict hunting to the minimum	Most hunting is not considered trophy hunting and there are rules to ensure use of the meat.
Banning hunting from more areas as the vast majority of the Washington population does not hunt	Over 80 percent of Washington residents support legal, regulated hunting. Hunting areas are restricted when necessary to manage game populations.
Ban introduction of animals for hunting	Trapping and transferring animals to suitable habitats can be a viable management tool. The department carefully considers the use of the technique prior to implementation.
Ban hunting	Hunting is part of the legal mandate from the Washington State Legislature and is supported by the majority of the state's residents.

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<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Ban hunting in multi-use areas to promote hiker/ horseback rider safety	The safety of competing recreationists is always considered in developing regulations. Hunting ranks very high as a safe outdoor activity. Balancing recreational use is a high priority for the department, especially on lands we own or manage.
Avoid introduction of non-native species	Non-native species can be detrimental to native species, but can also be very beneficial to the public. It is very important to carefully consider new introductions to ensure they cause minimal and/or acceptable risks. WDFW has not proposed new species introductions for many years and continues to carefully monitor the impacts of current non-native species and take action where necessary and feasible.
Opposed to introducing non-native wildlife species.	See above.
Over the past few years, the dept. has made many changes to increase revenue form the sportsman but the hunting and seasons have got worse and worse to the point I'm going out of state as much as possible.	The department must first develop regulations that ensure perpetuation of game species. After that, we try to work with citizens to craft seasons that are supported and provide a variety of opportunities. Most other states do the same, however they tend to be larger geographically, have more habitat, and fewer people.
Any type of baiting of animals for hunting should be prohibited	There have been fairly strong arguments on both sides of the baiting issue. Many baiting practices have been curtailed and the department continues to facilitate debate on this issue.
Protection of wildlife & their habitat should be the role of WDFW	WDFW is a very strong advocate of habitat protection and regularly supports protection in reviewing land management documents, through land acquisition, and comment on management actions. However, this survey is specific to taking comments on hunting regulations.
Reduce areas open to hunting, trapping, and fishing	There are many areas of the state that are not open for hunting currently. The Fish and Wildlife Commission when necessary for wildlife management set additional areas aside.
Reduce bag limits and shorten seasons	Bag limits and seasons are established to ensure long-term perpetuation of game populations.
Reduce liberal bag limits and seasons	See above.
Reduce trophy hunting per WDFW 2002 Draft Environmental Impact Statement	Hunters are required to use the meat of harvested game. The 2003-09 Game Management Plan identified strategies for greater public education and understanding of specific practices that might be considered "trophy hunting" by the public.
Re-establish trapping as a recreational sport	Trapping continues to be permitted and managed in Washington. It is the types of traps that were restricted by citizen initiative a couple of years ago.

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<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Re-evaluate point system. People w/points don't get drawn; zero point people get drawn year after year.	The nature of a random drawing even with weighted points means that some folks with zero points will be drawn. The weighted point system does result in a much greater chance of being drawn for those with significant numbers of points.
Re-evaluate the closure of coyote hunting in certain portions of the Okanogan N.F. between Sept.-Dec. 1, reinstate a trapping season based natural science, not political science or public votes.	The coyote closure was instituted to protect wolves from mistaken identity. At this point, the impacts to coyote populations and harvest appear to be minimal.
Re-introduce native predators & ban hunting in areas with population issues.	There are many areas of the state that may not be able to support large predators. It is highly likely that there would be continuous conflict with people that would prove unmanageable and undesirable. Prey populations would continue to require management and hunting is an effective and accepted method. Most small predator populations are very healthy and large predators such as the grizzly bear and gray wolf populations are slowly increasing.
Remove special youth hunting opportunities, the general public doesn't support the encouragement of youth hunting	Actually in a 2002 survey, the general public was split on whether they supported special opportunities for youth hunters. This tells managers to carefully consider the types of opportunities provided, which the department has been doing.
Require WILD ID number to participate in this type of survey	Wildlife belongs to all of Washington's citizens and all should have a voice in management. For some responses to specific survey questions, it is important to know if the respondent hunts and for which species, so some surveys do request WILD ID numbers.
Rescind the firearm/side arm restriction while hunting with archery equipment during archery seasons while in wilderness areas. Bear threats – I have experience with this issue. No liability issue for the state if a hunter is hurt while not being restricted to hand-to-hand combat against bears	Bear encounters with hunters are extremely rare and it is important to remember that archery equipment is very lethal in terms of taking game including bears. The department will however, consider this request during the current three-year season setting process. The greatest concern about allowing archery hunters to carry a sidearm is the potential to illegally take deer or elk.
Restrict hunting in Island County. Especially Whidbey Island it has been developed and hunters are a danger to residents. One man from Everett shot a deer in my neighbor's front yard! This is irresponsible	If uncontrolled, deer numbers expand and vehicle collisions and nuisance problems increase to the point of public demands for change. Balancing the problems caused by high deer populations with sometimes irresponsible hunter behavior is an important part of wildlife management in urbanizing areas. A citizen group has been formed to assist the department with regulations for the islands in the Puget Sound.

OTHER	
<i>COMMENTS</i>	<i>RESPONSES</i>
Reduce hunting fees for senior citizens & youth	There are significant numbers of senior and youth hunters. Youth already receive reduced licenses. Further reduction of fees would have a significant on revenues to the department and funding for critical wildlife management activities.
Address the downside of introducing non-native species for the purpose of hunting	Those issues are typically included in management plans and were recently covered in the 2003-09 Game Management Plan EIS.
Review controlled night activities in game management areas check in and out times	These types of rules would need to be developed and reviewed by citizen advisory groups. Planning for WDFW's wildlife areas is currently in progress. For more information about how to get involved, please check our web site at www.wdfw.wa.gov or call (360) 902-2515.
Review species of concern regulations	State listed threatened or endangered species are those that without some assistance would likely be extirpated in this state in the foreseeable future. Other than for bald eagles, the only legal protections (regulations) are that they cannot be hunted. Some other governmental agencies also use the state list to condition resource and land use practices. One example is the Department of Natural Resources and setting rules for how a landowner may harvest timber under a forest practice permit. The permit may be conditioned to protect the habitat of a state listed species.
Revise the Rules: No dogs used to hunt any animal species	There is a long tradition of hunters using dogs to assist in the pursuit of game animals. The use and associated harvest rates can be managed by wildlife officials to ensure stable populations. In some cases, the use of dogs allows for more precise management of segments of the harvest such as age or sex classes.